**University of Alberta**

# Visibility of the Congo War in Leading U.S. Newspapers: The *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the War in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

by

Gregory Guy Maurice Queyranne

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# Abstract

This project examines the level of media coverage of the ongoing conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in two of the U.S.'s leading newspapers: the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. The results are compared with the amount of coverage that these newspapers accorded to two other conflicts occurring at approximately the same time as the Congo War, the conflicts in Kosovo and Darfur. It is hypothesized that the conflict in the Congo has received less coverage in the *Times* and the *Post* than the wars in Kosovo and Darfur. These findings are significant, since the Congo War has killed over 5.4 million people, more than any other conflict since World War II. It is suggested that geography, the nature of these conflicts, activism, the U.S. government, and advertisers all play a role in influencing the disparate levels of media attention accorded to these three conflicts.

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# List of Abbreviations

**AFDL** – *Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo*
(Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo)

**CNDP** – *Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple*
(National Congress for the Defence of the People)

**DRC** – Democratic Republic of the Congo

**FAR** – *Forces Armées Rwandaises* (Rwandan Armed Forces)

**FAZ** – *Forces Armées Zaïroises* (Zairian Armed Forces)

**FDLR** – *Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda*
(Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda)

**FNI** – *Front des Nationalistes et Intégrationnistes* (Nationalist and Integrationist Front)

**HRW** – Human Rights Watch

**IRC** – International Rescue Committee

**KLA** – Kosovo Liberation Army

**MLC** – *Mouvement de Libération du Congo* (Movement for the Liberation of Congo)

**RCD** – *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie* (Rally for Congolese Democracy)

**RCD-Goma** – *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie – Goma*
(Rally for Congolese Democracy – Goma)

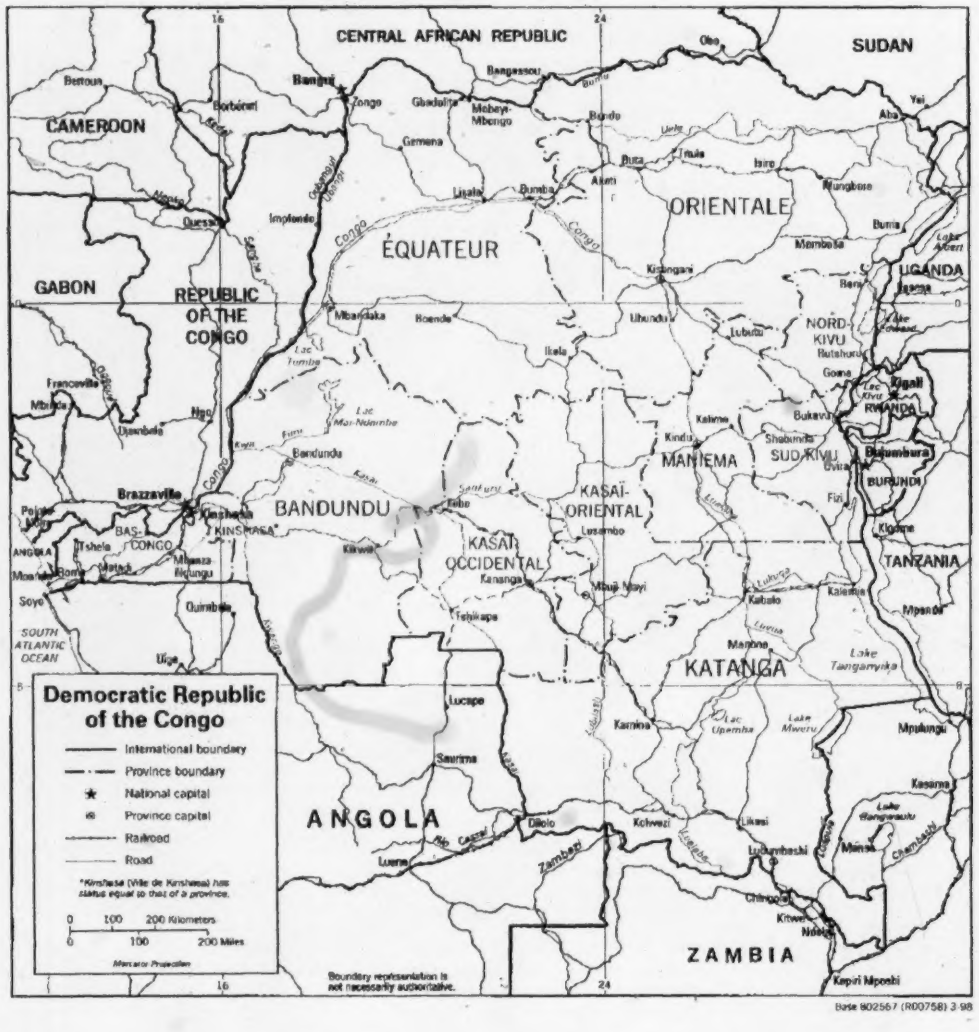
**RCD-ML** – *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie – Mouvement de Libération*
(Rally for Congolese Democracy – Liberation Movement)

**RPA** - Rwandan Patriotic Army

**RPF** – Rwandan Patriotic Front

**UPDF** – Uganda People's Defence Forces

# Map of the Democratic Republic of the Congo




Source: University of Texas Libraries. Available from <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/africa/congo_demrep_pol98.jpg>.

# Introduction

In its mortality survey on the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) published in January 2008, the International Rescue Committee concluded that approximately 5.4 million people had died in the Congo as a result of the conflict that began in August 1998.[1] Reacting to these findings in an article titled "The Invisible War," journalist Amy Goodman writes: "An important question for us in the U.S. is: How could close to 6 million people die from war and related disease in one country in less than a decade and go virtually unnoticed?"[2] This thesis seeks to provide one of the answers to this pressing question.

One may find useful explanations for such a phenomenon in examining the extent to which the news media have covered the conflict. After all, as Michael Parenti notes, "[f]or many people an issue does not exist until it appears in the news media," since what we "define as an issue or event, what we see and hear, and what we do *not* see and hear are greatly determined by those who control the communications world".[3] Preliminary research would suggest that the conflict in the DRC has generated low levels of media coverage. Virgil Hawkins argues that the war in the Congo has not only become a "stealth conflict" – one of many conflicts that are "consistently absent from policy, media, public and academic agendas" – but, due its exceedingly large death toll, "can be

---

[1] Benjamin Coghlan et al. "Mortality in the Democratic Republic of Congo: An Ongoing Crisis." International Rescue Committee. 2008. Available from <http://www.theirc.org/resources/2007/2006-7_congomortalitysurvey.pdf>.

[2] Amy Goodman. "The Invisible War." Truthdig. 23 January 2008. Available from <http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/20080123_the_invisible_war/>.

[3] Michael Parenti. Inventing Reality: The Politics of the Mass Media. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986: ix. Emphasis in original.

considered…without a doubt, the greatest stealth conflict in human history."[4] In mid-2005, *The Christian Science Monitor* published an opinion piece titled "In Congo, 1,000 die per day: Why isn't it a media story?" The author, the International Crisis Group's Andrew Stroehlein, wrote that while the "Western media generally do not cover the ongoing war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo…a media story is currently developing around the Congo - focusing, paradoxically, on how the conflict is not a media story."[5]

Indeed, it reached many organizations' lists of forgotten emergencies in recent years. The medical aid charity *Médecins sans Frontières* (MSF), for example, ranked it number one on its list of the "[t]op ten under-reported humanitarian stories of 2005," with MSF adding that "[t]he extreme deprivation and violence endured by millions of Congolese goes virtually unnoticed to [*sic*] the rest of the world."[6] Similarly, the United Nations included the Congo's continuing humanitarian disaster on its 2006 list of '10 Stories the World Should Hear More About'; "the immense human suffering" experienced by those in the Congo, the UN wrote, "all too often remains outside the glare of sustained media attention."[7] Interestingly, in 2005 the Reuters Foundation, created in 1982 by the Reuters news agency, published on its 'AlertNet' website a poll based on "103 humanitarian professionals, media personalities, academics and policymakers," that asked "which

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[4] Virgil Hawkins. "Stealth Conflicts: Africa's World War in the DRC and International Consciousness." The Journal of Humanitarian Assistance. 1 January 2004. Available from <http://www.jha.ac/articles/a126.htm>.

[5] Andrew Stroehlein. "In Congo, 1,000 die per day: Why isn't it a media story?" The Christian Science Monitor. 14 June 2005. Available from <http://www.csmonitor.com/2005/0614/p09s02-coop.html>.

[6] MSF Reports. "Top ten under-reported humanitarian stories of 2005." *Médecins sans Frontières*. 12 January 2006. Available from <http://www.msf.org/msfinternational/invoke.cfm?objectid=BE9D3CA3-A88C-5381-2B0F0FDC6FE53946&component=toolkit.report&method=full_html#drc>.

[7] "10 Stories the World Should Hear More About: DR of Congo: As the country moves boldly towards historic vote, humanitarian concerns continue to demand attention." United Nations. 2006. Available from <http://www.un.org/events/tenstories/06/story.asp?storyID=2300>.

'forgotten' crises they would urge the media to focus on in 2005." The war in the Congo ranked number one, with nearly half of those polled nominating the Congo.[8]

Have, as some of these writers and organizations suggest, the Western media underreported the conflict in the DRC? If so, to what extent? Answers to these questions become increasingly important when examining the severity of the war. The conflict in the Congo has the tragic honour of being unceremoniously crowned 'Africa's First World War.' In terms of the number of lives that the war has claimed, it is the deadliest conflict since World War II. Tens of thousands of people continue to perish every month.[9] It has seen the direct military participation of ten African states, a plethora of rebels and militias, and the involvement of countless multinational corporations.[10] Hundreds of thousands of women and girls are estimated to have been the victims of sexual violence during the conflict.[11] As well, the citizens of other countries, especially in the privileged Western world, may have played a role in unintentionally fuelling this vicious war.[12] If Goodman's assessment is correct – that the war has gone 'virtually unnoticed' in the U.S. – then American citizens have been seriously underinformed about the largest war of this generation.

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[8] Ruth Gidley. "Congo war tops AlertNet poll of 'forgotten' crises." AlertNet. 10 March 2005. Available from <http://www.alertnet.org/thefacts/reliefresources/111038817665.htm>.

[9] Coghlan et al. "Mortality in the Democratic Republic of Congo: An Ongoing Crisis."

[10] For more on the role of state and non-state actors in the conflict, please see the following sections in Chapter 1: "1998: 'Africa's First World War' Begins," and "Multinational Corporations and War Profiteering."

[11] Chris McGreal. "Hundreds of thousands of women raped for being on the wrong side." The Guardian. 12 November 2007. Available from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2007/nov/12/congo.international>; For more on the conflict's effects on women and girls, please see the section in Chapter 1 titled "Sexual Violence Against Women: The 'War Within the War.'"

[12] For more on the relationship between consumerism and the conflict, please see the section in Chapter 1 titled "Resource Exploitation and Western Consumption."

### *Methodological and Theoretical Framework*

This thesis examines the amount of coverage that the war in the DRC has received in two of the most influential newspapers in the United States: the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*.[13] Using Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky's method of studying paired examples – contrasting selected media's coverage of two similar issues[14] – this thesis compares the level of coverage that the *Times* and the *Post* accorded to the DRC conflict with two other conflicts that occurred at approximately the same time: the conflict in Kosovo, and the conflict in Darfur. While being in Europe may have affected the amount of coverage that the Kosovo conflict obtained, the amount of coverage of the Congo War is then compared to the amount of coverage that these two newspapers accorded to a conflict in the same region as the DRC: the Darfur region of Sudan, a country bordering the Congo.

Examining paired examples is an important method by which to test what Herman and Chomsky call a "propaganda model" of the American mass media, which characterizes the latter as organizations that "serve to mobilize support for the special interests that dominate the state and private activity."[15] The study of paired examples examines the mass media's reaction to "crimes attributable to official enemies [of the U.S.] versus those for which the United States and its clients bear responsibility."[16] The propaganda model purports that the American news media will accord considerable coverage to "worthy" victims of the former, in contrast to minimal coverage of

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[13] Ben Bagdikian. The Media Monopoly. Boston: Beacon Press, 1983: 24-25.
[14] Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky. Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media. New York: Pantheon Books, 1988: 37-142.
[15] Ibid.: xi.
[16] Noam Chomsky. Necessary Illusions: Thought Control in Democratic Societies. Concord, Ontario: House of Anansi Press Ltd., 1989: 137, 10.

"unworthy" victims of the latter.[17] Such a methodological and theoretical framework is a useful means for hypothesizing about and analyzing the coverage that the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* have accorded to the conflict in the DRC, since the war's main instigators, Rwanda and Uganda, have had close diplomatic and military relations with the United States. The model would thus encourage us to hypothesize that the conflict in the Congo would have generated less coverage in these two newspapers than the conflicts in Kosovo and Darfur, since the key perpetrators of the conflict have been American allies and recipients of U.S. military assistance, while those responsible for the violence in Kosovo and Darfur have been enemies of the United States.

The utility of studying paired examples is conveyed by the observed differences in the American mass media's coverage of the atrocities in Cambodia committed by Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge regime, and the slaughter carried out by Indonesia's invasion of East Timor. Both of these tragedies occurred at approximately the same time (the late 1970s), in roughly the same part of the world, and were of similar scale. It should be emphasized that the horrors in Cambodia were perpetrated by official enemies of the U.S., while Indonesia was a "loyal ally"[18] and "carried out [massacres in East Timor] with U.S. weapons and *de facto* support."[19] Chomsky notes that "in the case of Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge there were denunciations of genocide [in the American mass media] from the first moment, a huge outcry of protest," and even "fabrication of evidence on a grand scale" and "suppression of some of the most reliable sources…because they did not support the preferred picture." In contrast, coverage of East Timor "declined from a

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[17] Herman and Chomsky. Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media: 37.
[18] Ibid.: 301-03.
[19] Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman. The Political Economy of Human Rights, Volume 1: The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism. Montréal: Black Rose Books, 1979: 71.

substantial level before the U.S.-backed Indonesian invasion to flat zero as the atrocities reached their peak with increasing U.S. support."[20] Empirically, "[i]n 1976, when Indonesian troops were carrying out a major massacre, coverage dropped to less than half a column" of citations of Timor in the *New York Times* index, down from "six full columns" in 1975. "For 1977, when the massacre advanced to a point that some feel amounts to genocide, there are five lines," all of which "refer to a story about refugees in Portûgal"; "[a]ctual coverage of East Timor" in 1977, Chomsky notes, is zero.[21] Between 1975 and 1979, references to Timor in the *Times* index totaled 70 column inches; in comparison, Cambodia received 1,175 column inches in the same time span.[22]

Herman and Chomsky argue that the "propaganda model provides a ready explanation for this quite typical dichotomous treatment." Not only were the atrocities in Cambodia carried out by Communists, the U.S.'s Cold War enemy, but high levels of media coverage of the carnage helped serve broader foreign policy goals: "The image of Communist monsters," the authors write, "would also be useful for subsequent U.S. participation in terror and violence, as in its crusades in Central America shortly after." Indonesia's massacres in East Timor, in contrast, "have no such utilitarian function." Moreover, "attention to the Indonesian invasion would have embarrassed a loyal ally and quickly disclosed the crucial role of the United States in providing military aid and diplomatic support for aggression and slaughter. Plainly," Herman and Chomsky argue,

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[20] Chomsky. Necessary Illusions: Thought Control in Democratic Societies: 156.
[21] Chomsky and Herman. The Political Economy of Human Rights, Volume 1: The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism: 151.
[22] Mark Achbar, ed. Manufacturing Consent: Noam Chomsky and the Media. Montréal: Black Rose Books, 1994: 107.

"news about East Timor would not have been useful, and would, in fact, have discomfited important domestic power groups."[23]

## *Literature Review*

While the conflict in the Congo has been described as "the invisible war" and "Africa's forgotten and ignored war,"[24] some, though limited, quantitative research has been done on the news media's coverage of the war in the DRC. Hawkins found that in 2000, selected prominent Western news media provided relatively little coverage of the Congo War, compared with their coverage of other conflicts or peace processes. Hawkins looked at BBC World News and CNN World News, along with the most influential newspapers from the U.S., France and Japan: the *New York Times*, *Le Monde*, and *Yomiuri*, respectively. The amount of coverage of conflicts and peace processes for the two television news networks was determined by measuring the length, in seconds, of

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[23] Herman and Chomsky. Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media: 302; Influenced by Herman and Chomsky's research on the subject, Sharon Scharfe undertook a similar study, by comparing the amount of 'major articles' that the Canadian newspaper the *Globe and Mail* gave to Indonesia's invasion and occupation of East Timor, with the amount of coverage that the *Globe* gave to atrocities by the Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia, between 1 November 1977 and 31 August 1993. Asserting that "[m]ost people have not heard of the tragedy in East Timor because it is not reported in the news," Scharfe's data shows that the *Globe* provided considerably more coverage of the killings in Cambodia than those in East Timor: the latter received a total of 63 'major articles,' while Cambodia obtained 751 in the same time period. Sharon Scharfe. Complicity: Human Rights and Canadian Foreign Policy. Montréal: Black Rose Books, 1996: 112-17; Reviewing Scharfe's research, Jeffery Klaehn writes that the *Globe*'s coverage of East Timor "reduced significantly after Indonesia invaded and dropped to almost nil as the atrocities reached their peak throughout 1978/9." Klaehn concludes that Scharfe's research confirms Herman and Chomsky's propaganda model: Because of the Canadian government's diplomatic, commercial and military relations with Indonesia, the *Globe* ensured that coverage of Indonesia's atrocities in East Timor, both in quality and quantity, supported Canada's geopolitical and economic interests. Jeffery Klaehn. "Corporate Hegemony: A Critical Assessment of the *Globe and Mail*'s News Coverage of Near-Genocide in Occupied East Timor, 1975-80." Gazette: The International Journal for Communication Studies. Volume 64(4), 2002: 301-321.

[24] Amy Goodman. "The Invisible War." Truthdig. 23 January 2008. Available from <http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/20080123_the_invisible_war/>; Paul Salopek. "Congo: The invisible war: In need for compassion, Africa's deadliest conflict overshadowed by Darfur." Chicago Tribune. 17 December 2007. Available from <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/chi-congo_salopekdec17,1,3573906.story>; Fergal Keane. "Africa's forgotten and ignored war." BBC. 18 October 2003. Available from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/from_our_own_correspondent/3201770.stm>.

each story on a conflict or peace process in one 30-minute news program for each day in the year 2000; for the newspapers, amount of coverage of conflicts or peace processes was measured in the stories' square centimeters. These media outlets' amount of coverage of the conflict or peace process in the DRC in 2000 was lower than their coverage of other conflicts or peace processes. The Congo War was the *Times*' 8th most covered conflict or peace process in that year, *Le Monde*'s 11th, CNN's 14th, the BBC's 15th, and was not in *Yomiuri*'s top fifteen[25] – while the war had by May 2000 killed an estimated 1.7 million civilians.[26] The conflicts or peace processes in Chechnya, Colombia, Israel-Lebanon, Israel-Palestine, Kosovo, Northern Ireland and Sierra Leone all received more coverage than the war in the Congo in all of the media examined by Hawkins.[27]

In 2004, Alison Holder sought to determine if the Congo War had received less U.S. media coverage than the 1996-97 Zairian War. Holder conducted the research by examining four American television news programs and two U.S. newspapers: *ABC World News Tonight*, *CBS Evening News*, *NBC Nightly News*, *CNN*, the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. Holder treated the two wars as one, divided into two sections: 'Phase 1' – October 1996 to May 1997 – and 'Phase 2' – August 1998 to January 2001.[28] Focusing first on the results for the selected television news programs, Holder reports that for Phase 1 there were 326 stories on the Congo, totaling 900 minutes, producing "an average of over 40 broadcasts or 112 minutes of coverage per month." For Phase 2, in

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[25] Virgil Hawkins. "The Other Side of the CNN Factor: the media and conflict." Journalism Studies. Volume 3, Number 2. 2002: 225-240. Available from <http://csclm.org/Hawkins1>.

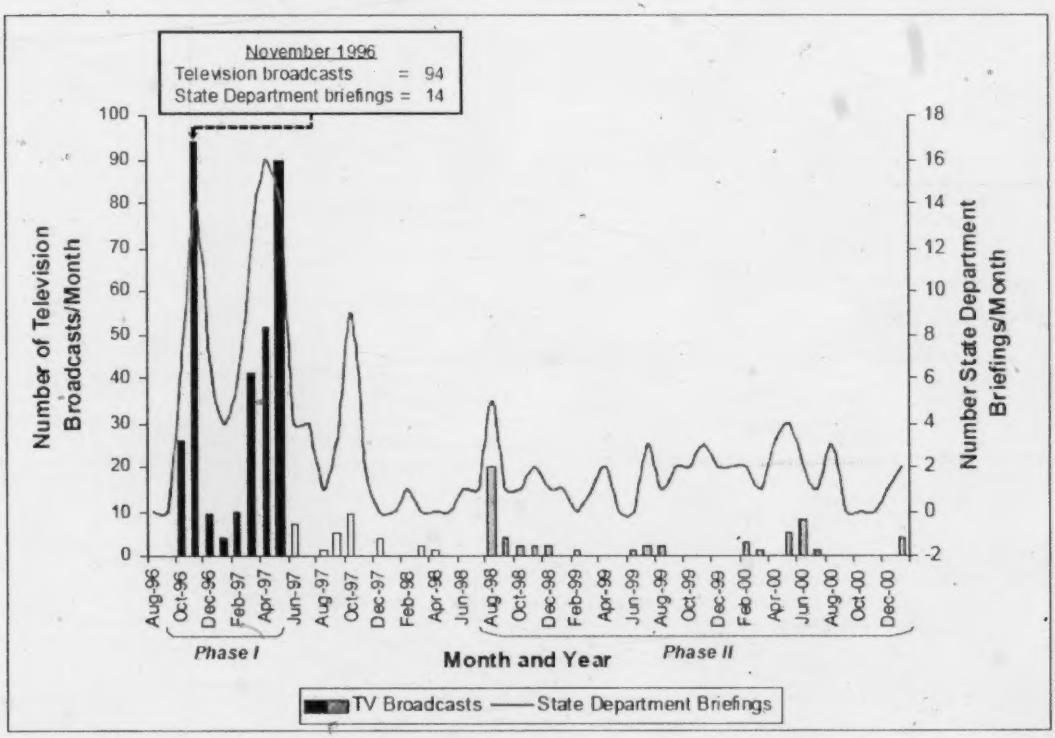
[26] Roberts. "Mortality in Eastern DRC. Results from Five Mortality Surveys by the International Rescue Committee May 2000": 1.

[27] Hawkins. "The Other Side of the CNN Factor: the media and conflict."

[28] Alison Holder. "Forgotten or Ignored? News Media Silence and the Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo" (Master's thesis, London School of Economics, 2004): 5, 17. Available from <http://www.stanhopecentre.org/network/holder_dissertation.pdf>.

sharp contrast, these media produced "only 58 stories about Congo, totaling 73 minutes – an average of less than 2 broadcasts or less than 3 minutes of coverage per month."[29] Figure 0.1 shows the differences in amounts of stories on the Congo per month in phases 1 and 2 in the aforementioned television news programs. Given the number of stories between Phase 1 and 2, it is evident that the research focused on stories on the Congo, rather than those focusing on the conflict in the Congo.

**Figure 0.1.** *Amount of Television Coverage of the DRC and U.S. State Department Briefings Mentioning the DRC, per Month*[30]




Comparative coverage of the two phases of the conflict by the selected newspapers, the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, however, proved to be "less marked than

[29] Ibid.: 18-20.
[30] Ibid.: 26.

with the television coverage." For the nine months of Phase 1, these two media produced 1,057 stories on the Congo – "an average of over 117 stories per month." In the thirty months of Phase 2 of the conflict, in contrast, there were 1,236 stories on the Congo in these media, producing "an average of only 41 stories per month."[31] In both the television and print American news media that Holder studied, a considerably lower amount of coverage was devoted to Phase 2 of the conflict – which this thesis examines – in contrast to Phase 1.

Holder's explanation for this discrepancy supports Herman and Chomsky's propaganda model perspective of media-government interaction as opposed to the theory of the "CNN effect," which purports that the media are able to influence governmental policies.[32] Juxtaposing the data for the selected American television news media's comparative coverage of the two phases of the Congo conflict with the number of press briefings by the U.S. government's State Department that mention the Congo (Figure 0.1) shows a noticeable correlation. Holder argues that the reason for the different amounts of coverage for the two phases of the Congo conflict was that "media coverage was 'indexed' to government policy. It was not a change in journalistic initiative," Holder writes, but rather "a change in the policy landscape, that led to media *coverage* of the first conflict and media *silence* on the second."[33] The media obtained "'cues'" from the U.S. government indicating "that Congo was on the government agenda" during Phase 1 of the conflict, influencing them to cover the issue.[34] As Holder argues, partly because of the

[31] Ibid.: 21.
[32] Ibid.: 4.
[33] Ibid.: 13 (emphasis in original).
[34] Ibid.: 27.

upcoming American presidential elections,[35] "it was in the interest of the Clinton administration to have media coverage of certain aspects of the unfolding conflict in Congo – specifically, the plight of the Rwandan refugees trapped in eastern Congo."[36]

> The rise of the conflict in Congo in October 1996 gave the Clinton administration the opportunity to 'use' the media to celebrate the humanitarian assistance that the US had provided towards the crisis of Rwandan refugees in eastern Congo.[37]

As such, "the US government was able to 'guide' news media coverage to serve its own interests."[38] In contrast, the "policy landscape" in the U.S. "had changed" during Phase 2 of the conflict, "rendering media coverage of the conflict 'unhelpful' to the US government."[39] As with the case of East Timor discussed above, Holder writes that Rwanda's involvement in Phase 2 of the war, its massive human rights abuses in the Congo during Phase 1, and its relations with the U.S., "plausibly made the prospect of media coverage 'discomforting' to the U.S. government as Rwanda's friend, arms dealer and military trainer."[40]

One of the most recent comparative quantitative studies on the subject was Ammina Kothari's 2007 study of major American newspapers' coverage of the conflict in the Congo compared with their coverage of the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Kothari's research focused on five prominent U.S. newspapers: *Chicago Tribune*, *LA Times*, the *New York Times*, *USA Today*, and the *Washington Post*, between 1 January 1995 and 1 January 2006. Using ProQuest and databases from *Chicago Times*, *LA Times*, and the *New York Times*, Kothari obtained the data by searching for stories "on the topics of civil

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[35] Ibid.: 31.
[36] Ibid.: 3.
[37] Ibid.: 14.
[38] Ibid.: 52.
[39] Ibid.: 14.
[40] Ibid.: 40-41.

war, conflict, ethnic conflict, and peacekeeping efforts." This search yielded a total of 410 stories that were identified as relevant to the war in the Congo, and 1,528 stories on the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina in the chosen newspapers within the timeframe. Table 0.1 provides the distribution of this data for each newspaper.[41]

**Table 0.1.** *Distribution of stories on the conflicts in the DRC and Bosnia-Herzegovina by newspaper, 1995-2006.*[42]

| | Chicago Tribune | The New York Times | Washington Post | LA Times | USA Today | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| War in the DRC | 45 | 145 | 133 | 57 | 30 | 410 |
| War in Bosnia-Herzegovina | 296 | 908 | 211 | 73 | 40 | 1528 |

Kothari notes that the comparatively lower levels of coverage of the war in the Congo as opposed to the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina is peculiar, given the significantly higher number of deaths in the former in contrast to the latter: an estimated four million deaths in the Congo for Kothari's study's time frame, compared with approximately 102,000 deaths in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The author suggests that this provides an example that the "coverage of African issues tends to be lower in comparison" to those in other countries.[43]

In late 2007, *Chicago Tribune* foreign correspondent Paul Salopek noted that the Tyndall Report, "a media organization that monitors nightly television news broadcasts on ABC, NBC and CBS," found that there were a total of "16 major reports on Darfur" in

[41] Ammina Kothari. "'Africa's First World War': US Newspapers' Coverage of the Civil War in the Democratic Republic of Congo in Comparison to the Bosnia-Herzegovina's Conflict." (Presented at the 7th Annual Graduate Student Conference – April 21, 2007: Critical Themes in Media Studies, University of Oregon). Available from <http://www.cannon-beach.net/newschool/Kothari.pdf>.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid.

these media in 2006, compared with one on the Congo. Searching the LexisNexis news database, Salopek found "roughly 230 significant newspaper articles on Darfur" in 2006, while the Congo "merited about 60."[44]

As the above research suggests, the Congo War has generated comparatively less media attention than other conflicts occurring at approximately the same time. This study goes further, by providing a detailed examination of the extent to which the conflict in the DRC has been reported in two of the United States' leading newspapers, in terms of both news articles and opinion pieces, in comparison to a conflict in Europe as well as a conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa.

### *Thesis Overview*

Chapter 1 serves as a brief summary of the Congo conflict, which is important for understanding the history of the war since features of the conflict may have affected media coverage. While the chapter by no means provides a complete history of such a long and complex war, it covers the conflict's precipitating factors, its evolving phases, as well as key aspects, deemed imperative for an adequate understanding of the conflict. These include the role of regional states, armed groups and multinational corporations, and the role of the United States' diplomatic and especially military relations with some of the belligerents in the conflict. Particular emphasis is placed on the war's economic dimensions. The conflict's main aggressors, Rwanda and Uganda, have systematically exploited the Congo's natural resources, which are also seen as fuelling the conflict. The relationship between this plundering, western consumption and the continuation of the

[44] Salopek. "Congo: The invisible war: In need for compassion, Africa's deadliest conflict overshadowed by Darfur."

conflict are also explored. While Chapter 1 discusses the human toll of the war, it emphasizes the specific victimization experienced by women and girls, which are not only too often given insufficient attention when discussing victims of conflict, but are also seen as bearing the brunt of the war in the DRC.[45] In fact, 75% of all the rape cases that the medical nongovernmental organization *Médecins sans Frontières* (MSF) treats worldwide are in eastern Congo.[46]

Chapter 2 investigates if and to what extent two of the U.S.'s most influential newspapers, the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, have underreported the war in the Congo. By using Herman and Chomsky's method of studying paired examples, this chapter determines the number of news articles and opinion pieces that these two newspapers published on the Congo conflict per month, in comparison to the conflicts in Kosovo and Darfur. Chapter 2 then offers some potential explanations for this study's results.

While this research is primarily intended to provide a possible, albeit partial, explanation for Goodman's and others' assertion that few in the United States are aware of the Congo War, it is also intended to provide an indication of the importance of studying the outputs of such influential and powerful institutions as the news media.

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[45] Rebecca Feeley and Colin Thomas-Jensen. "Getting Serious about Ending Conflict and Sexual Violence in Congo." Enough Project. 19 March 2008: 2. Available from <http://www.enoughproject.org/files/reports/CongoSerious.pdf>.

[46] Chris McGreal. "Hundreds of thousands of women raped for being on the wrong side." The Guardian. 12 November 2007. Available from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2007/nov/12/congo.international>.

# Chapter 1

# A Historical Overview of the Congo War

The war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is one of the greatest tragedies of the modern era. While this thesis focuses on the conflict in the Congo that began in early August 1998, one cannot properly understand this war without discussing some of the events that preceded it, including the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, and the 1996-97 Zairian War. In addition to its historical roots, this chapter provides a brief overview of the Congo War, the role of regional and international actors, the war's economic dynamics, and its effects on women.

## The Zairian War[47]

With crucial support from the United States and its Western allies, Mobutu Sese Seko ruled the Congo – which he had renamed 'Zaire' – for over thirty years.[48] In 1997, Mobutu's dictatorship ended when it was overthrown by Rwanda and Uganda, under the

[47] While this conflict has been called 'the first Congo war,' this thesis uses Howard Adelman and Govind C. Rao's term "the Zairian War," in order to clearly distinguish it from the focus of this thesis, the Congo War. Adelman, Howard and Govind C. Rao. "The Zairian War and Refugee Crisis, 1996-1997: Creating a Culture of Conflict Prevention." War and Peace in Zaire/Congo: Analyzing and Evaluating Intervention: 1996-1997. Ed. Howard Adelman and Govind C. Rao. Trenton: Africa World Press, Inc., 2004: 1-29.

[48] Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja. The Congo from Leopold to Kabila: A People's History. London: Zed Books, 2002: 141-42.

pretext of a Zairian rebellion.[49] The roots of this conflict, also known as the 'Zairian War,' date back to the 1994 Rwandan Genocide.[50]

### *Origins of the War*

On April 6 1994, the Rwandan president Juvénal Habyarimana was killed when his plane was shot down over Kigali, the capital of Rwanda, triggering the Rwandan Genocide, a systematic slaughter of roughly 800,000 Rwandans, mostly Tutsi as well as Hutu moderates, by the *Interahamwe* (an extremist Hutu militia) and the Rwandan army, the *Forces Armées Rwandaises* (FAR), over the course of one hundred days.[51] Prior to this, Habyarimana's government had negotiated the Arusha Accords in 1993 with a rebel group, the Tutsi-led Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) headed by Paul Kagame, that had attempted to overthrow the Rwandan regime in 1990. The accords included a ceasefire and power sharing, among other issues, but Habyarimana, "did his best to undermine" them.[52] During the genocide, the RPF launched an offensive against the FAR, and on July 19, 1994, took power in Kigali.[53]

As the RPF was gaining control of Rwanda, over 2 million people – citizens, the FAR and the *Interahamwe* – fled westward into refugee camps in Zaire. These camps were soon controlled by the FAR and the *Interahamwe*, which they used as bases from which

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[49] Johan Pottier. "Reporting the 'New' Rwanda: The Rise and Cost of Political Correctness, with Reference to Kibeha." Politics of Identity and Economics of Conflict in the Great Lakes Region. Ed. Ruddy Doom and Jan Gorus. Brussels: VUB University Press, 2000: 121.

[50] Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja. From Zaire to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Current African Issues No. 28. Second and revised ed. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2004: 8.

[51] Kevin C. Dunn. "A Survival Guide to Kinshasa: Lessons of the Father, Passed Down to the Son." The African Stakes of the Congo War. Ed. John F. Clark. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002: 55; Nzongola-Ntalaja. From Zaire to the Democratic Republic of the Congo: 8; Nzongola-Ntalaja. The Congo from Leopold to Kabila: A People's History: 222-23.

[52] Nzongola-Ntalaja. The Congo from Leopold to Kabila: A People's History: 222.

[53] Bjorn Willum. "Foreign Aid to Rwanda: Purely Beneficial or Contributing to War?" (Master's thesis, University of Copenhagen, 2001): 6-8. Available from <http://www.willum.com/dissertation/index.htm>.

to regroup and launch attacks against Rwanda, as well as the Banyamulenge, Tutsis living in eastern Zaire. In 1996, the Rwandan government (the RPF) and local Banyamulenge retaliated.[54]

### *The AFDL, Rwanda and Uganda*

In October 1996, "rebels launched a multiprong attack against the refugee camps, *Interahamwe*, and Zairian army," the *Forces Armées Zaïroises* (FAZ).[55] Though it was initially reported that these rebel attacks were undertaken by the Banyamulenge, it was later declared that they were being carried out by a group called the *Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo* (AFDL), a union of four Congolese rebel groups, led by Laurent Kabila. By late October, this rebel advance had taken control of Uvira, a city in the eastern province of South Kivu, followed by Bukavu (South Kivu's capital); on November 1, Goma, the capital of North Kivu, fell.[56] The AFDL rebellion moved westward, crossing this large central African country, eventually defeating the FAZ and capturing Zaire's capital, Kinshasa, in mid-May, 1997, ending Mobutu's thirty-two-year dictatorship. Kabila proclaimed himself the new president of the country he renamed the Democratic Republic of the Congo.[57]

It should be noted that "[i]ntegral" to the AFDL's military success "was the revenue generated from mineral commodities." As Michael Nest writes, "[w]ith military capacity but few cash resources at the start of its campaign, the AFDL set about selling state-

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[54] Dunn. "A Survival Guide to Kinshasa: Lessons of the Father, Passed Down to the Son": 55-56; Thomas Turner. The Congo Wars: Conflict, Myth and Reality. New York: Zed Books, 2007: 3-4.
[55] Dunn. "A Survival Guide to Kinshasa: Lessons of the Father, Passed Down to the Son": 56.
[56] Turner. The Congo Wars: Conflict, Myth and Reality: 4, 76.
[57] Dunn. "A Survival Guide to Kinshasa: Lessons of the Father, Passed Down to the Son": 57.

controlled assets – assets it did not yet control – in exchange for cash."[58] Indeed, multinational corporations were negotiating deals with Kabila to tap the Congo's natural resources during the Zairian War when Kabila was still a rebel.[59] In April 1997, the *New York Times* reported that mining company executives were "swarming"[60] the south-eastern province of Katanga, which holds "billions of dollars in untapped mineral reserves,"[61] one week after it fell to Kabila's AFDL rebels. In the province's capital, Lubumbashi, these executives "could be seen meeting at poolside and over meals with the rebels' finance minister and the newly appointed Governor" of Katanga,[62] less than two days after Kabila's troops captured the city. Arkansas-based American Mineral Fields (AMF) signed a multimillion-dollar deal with the rebel administration, its first mining contract; AMF's co-founder even "put his chartered Learjet at the rebel leader's disposal for three weeks."[63] Kabila's finance minister also began meeting with representatives of such prominent investing companies as Goldman Sachs and First Bank of Boston.[64]

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[58] Michael Nest et al. The Democratic Republic of Congo: Economic Dimensions of War and Peace. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2006: 23.

[59] Dena Montague. "Stolen Goods: Coltan and Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo." SAIS Review. Vol. XXII no. 1. Winter–Spring 2002: 109.

[60] James C. McKinley, Jr. "Zairian Rebels' New Allies: Men Armed with Briefcases." New York Times. 17 April 1997.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Dunn. "A Survival Guide to Kinshasa: Lessons of the Father, Passed Down to the Son": 59; It might be of interest to add that in October 1997, five months after the AFDL's victory, construction giant Bechtel helped "draw up a detailed development plan and inventory of the country's vast mineral resources," and even "commissioned and paid for" NASA "satellite studies of the country and for infrared maps of its mineral potential." Robert Stewart, Bechtel executive and former chairman of AMF, had also "become a trusted adviser to Mr. Kabila," and traveled across the DRC with Kabila "to help him deal with ethnic uprisings." One month after the Congo War began, Stewart – who claimed his mining concessions had been handed over to a relative of Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe – called for the ouster of Kabila. Robert Block. "U.S. Firms Seek Deals in Central Africa -- Bechtel Woos Congo as Region's Conflicts Continue to Fester." Wall Street Journal. 14 October 1997; Donald G. McNeil, Jr. "Congo Exile Group Emerges to Seek Ouster of President." New York Times. 2 September 1998.

While seen by outsiders as an uprising by disgruntled Congolese against Mobutu's dictatorship, Kevin C. Dunn notes that citizens rightly "dismissed Kabila's leadership position as a transparent effort by Rwanda and Uganda to give the rebellion a 'Zairian' face." Indeed, the AFDL insurrection, Dunn writes, was "[l]argely orchestrated by the Kagame regime in Rwanda,"[65] with Uganda's Yoweri Museveni regime, John F. Clark notes, being "deeply involved" in the revolt.[66]

In early July, 1997, less than two months after Kabila captured Kinshasa, Paul Kagame, in an interview with the *Washington Post*, admitted the key role his country played in overthrowing Mobutu. Kagame, then "Rwanda's powerful defense minister" as well as vice president and "Rwanda's most powerful leader," disclosed that, according to the *Post*'s John Pomfret, "the Rwandan government planned and directed the rebellion that toppled the longtime dictator and that Rwandan troops and officers led the rebel forces."[67] Prior to the rebellion, Rwanda's army had been training Congolese Tutsis, while "Rwandan agents started making contact with other Congolese rebel forces opposed to Mobutu. Slowly," Pomfret explains, "the organization that would be known as the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo [AFDL] began to take shape."[68] Shortly before the revolt, "Kagame dispatched Rwandan Tutsis who were related to Congolese Tutsis near Uvira with messages instructing them to prepare for war. He also sent weapons and reinforcements."[69] Kagame also admitted the importance of providing a Congolese face to the rebellion, in order to obtain domestic support and

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[65] Dunn. "A Survival Guide to Kinshasa: Lessons of the Father, Passed Down to the Son": 56.
[66] John F. Clark. "Museveni's Adventure in the Congo War: Uganda's Vietnam?" The African Stakes of the Congo War. Ed. John F. Clark. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002: 146.
[67] John Pomfret. "Rwandans Led Revolt in Congo." Washington Post. 9 July 1997.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid.

legitimacy: "As long as the people at the forefront were Zairian," Kagame said, "the rebellion was going to be easy."[70]

Uganda also played a central role, which "proved to be extremely important in Kabila's ascension to power."[71] Overthrowing Mobutu through the AFDL was one of the "joint projects undertaken together" by Kagame and Museveni, Clark writes, with Museveni "dispatching an unknown number of advisers from the Ugandan army."[72] Uganda was also reportedly providing the AFDL with money, weaponry, equipment, and tactical and communications support. Convoys of Ugandan military trucks were observed crossing into Zaire, according to aerial photographs.[73] Moreover, Uganda sent its own soldiers to assist Kabila's advance – which combined with Rwanda's contribution numbered "at least 1,000 troops," according to Human Rights Watch (HRW)[74] – in order, writes Ogenga Otunnu, to "reduce the time required to train and reorganize" anti-Mobutu rebel forces.[75] Other regional and international actors that assisted in the endeavor included Angola, Eritrea, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe.[76]

Kabila, however, disappointed his two principal foreign backers. As Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja explains, Rwanda and Uganda "had hoped to find in Laurent Kabila and the AFDL a useful cover for their strategic interest in creating a buffer zone of

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[70] Paul Kagame, quoted in ibid.
[71] Dunn. "A Survival Guide to Kinshasa: Lessons of the Father, Passed Down to the Son": 57.
[72] John F. Clark. "Explaining Ugandan Intervention in Congo: Evidence and Interpretations." The Journal of Modern African Studies. 39.2. 2001: 267-68.
[73] Stephen Buckley. "Uganda Reportedly Aids Rebels in Zairian War; Sources Say Arms, Money, Advice Provided." Washington Post. 4 March 1997.
[74] Human Rights Watch, quoted in Ogenga Otunnu. "Uganda as a Regional Actor in the Zairian War." War and Peace in Zaire/Congo: Analyzing and Evaluating Intervention: 1996-1997. Ed. Howard Adelman and Govind C. Rao. Trenton: Africa World Press, Inc., 2004: 67.
[75] Otunnu. "Uganda as a Regional Actor in the Zairian War": 53.
[76] Martin R. Rupiya. "A Political and Military Review of Zimbabwe's Involvement in the Second Congo War." The African Stakes of the Congo War. Ed. John F. Clark. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002: 95.

economic and political security in eastern Congo."[77] Since Kabila "proved not to be acting as expected for Rwanda and Uganda,"[78] they decided to replace him by force.

## The Congo War

In August 1998, less than fifteen months after installing Kabila as the Congo's president, Rwanda and Uganda reinvaded the Congo in an initial attempt to overthrow him. After failing to capture Kinshasa, Rwandan and Ugandan troops, along with their rebel allies, focused their military operations in the eastern and northern areas of the DRC. From 1998 to 2003, they militarily occupied roughly half of the Congo, a country approximately the size of Western Europe,[79] and systematically plundered the country's mineral wealth.[80] Atrocities against civilians, particularly women, escalated, as the conflict soon claimed more lives than any other since World War II.[81]

### *1997-98: Kabila's Relations with Rwanda and Uganda Collapse*

President Kabila's rule began with significant influence from the two principal states that brought him to power, especially Rwanda.[82] Rwandophone Tutsi and others with

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[77] Nzongola-Ntalaja. The Congo from Leopold to Kabila: 227.
[78] Koen Vlassenroot. "Identity and Insecurity. The Building of Ethnic Agendas in South Kivu." Politics of Identity and Economics of Conflict in the Great Lakes Region. Ed. Ruddy Doom and Jan Gorus. Brussels: VUB University Press, 2000: 276.
[79] Turner. The Congo Wars: Conflict, Myth and Reality: 24.
[80] United Nations Security Council. "Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo." United Nations. 16 April 2001. Available from <http://www.un.org/News/dh/latest/drcongo.htm>.
[81] "Conflict in Congo Deadliest Since World War II, Says The IRC: Tenuous Peace Process Needs International Support." International Rescue Committee. 8 April 2003. Available from <http://www.theirc.org/news/conflict_in_congo_deadliest_since_world_war_ii_says_the_irc.html>.
[82] Dunn. "A Survival Guide to Kinshasa: Lessons of the Father, Passed Down to the Son": 60; Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja. "The International Dimensions of the Congo Crisis." UNDP Oslo Governance Centre. November 22, 2006. Available from

close ties to the RPF regime in Rwanda became senior officials in Kabila's government, such as the new personal secretary to the president, the secretary-general of the AFDL, and the foreign minister[83]; the latter, Bizima Karaha, "was widely seen as Rwanda's man in Congo" and would later become the security chief for the RCD-Goma, a rebel group in eastern DRC supported by Rwanda.[84] Lt. Col. James Kabarebe, previously the head of the Rwandan Republican Guard, became the chief of staff of the newly created Congolese army[85]; he would later be in charge of the Rwandan army's operations in the Congo and then be promoted to chief of staff of the Rwandan army.[86] The Ugandan Jackson Nzinza, the former head of Rwanda's Internal Security Organization, became the Congo's chief of national security.[87]

This proved to be a considerable political liability, as Congolese citizens perceived Kabila to be merely a puppet installed by neighbouring powers. To counter this, Kabila began to distance himself from Uganda and Rwanda.[88] In May, 1998, he replaced the secretary-general of the AFDL, followed by replacing army chief of staff Kabarebe in July.[89] He also accused Rwandans and Ugandans of illegal exploitation of the DRC's

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<http://www.undp.org/oslocentre/docs05/The%20International%20Dimensions%20of%20the%20Congo%20Crisis.pdf>.

[83] Nzongola-Ntalaja. "The International Dimensions of the Congo Crisis": 2; Nzongola-Ntalaja. From Zaire to the Democratic Republic of the Congo: 14.

[84] Turner. The Congo Wars: Conflict, Myth and Reality: 92; Ellen Ray. "U.S. Military and Corporate Recolonization of the Congo." Covert Action Quarterly. Spring/Summer 2000; Herbert Weiss. War and Peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Current African Issues No. 22. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2000: 18.

[85] Osita Afoaku. "Congo's Rebels: Their Origins, Motivations, and Strategies." The African Stakes of the Congo War. Ed. John F. Clark. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002: 110; Nzongola-Ntalaja. From Zaire to the Democratic Republic of the Congo: 14; Turner. The Congo Wars: Conflict, Myth and Reality: 5.

[86] "Key Figures on U.N. List." BBC. 21 October 2002. Available from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/2346707.stm>.

[87] Afoaku. "Congo's Rebels: Their Origins, Motivations, and Strategies": 112.

[88] Ibid.: 111; Dunn. "A Survival Guide to Kinshasa: Lessons of the Father, Passed Down to the Son": 61-62; Martin Meredith. The Fate of Africa: From the Hopes of Freedom to the Heart of Despair: A History of Fifty Years of Independence. New York: PublicAffairs, 2005: 538.

[89] Turner. The Congo Wars: Conflict, Myth and Reality: 5.

resources in the east.[90] In a decision that would trigger an international war, Kabila, in late July, thanked Rwanda and Uganda for the help they had given him and asked them to remove their troops from Congolese soil. They reacted by orchestrating another rebellion in the east, complemented by a reinvasion of the Congo five days later.[91]

There are, to be sure, other essential factors that help explain Rwanda and Uganda's decision to invade the DRC a second time. Both governments claimed to be intervening to prevent a genocide against Congolese Tutsi.[92] Rwanda and Uganda also had legitimate security concerns, considering the existence of rebel groups along their borders in eastern Congo, and their perception that Kabila was not doing enough to remove them. Hutu rebels responsible for the 1994 Rwandan genocide were operating from eastern Congo and attacking citizens in Rwanda, while Kigali suspected that Kabila was recruiting the *Interahamwe* into the new Congolese army.[93] For Uganda, the rebel Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) based in eastern Congo had been terrorizing and abducting Ugandan citizens since 1996.[94] However, security agreements between the Congo and Uganda permitted the Ugandan army (the Uganda People's Defence Forces, UPDF) onto Congolese territory; that is, as Clark notes, "[t]he UPDF could certainly have crossed the Congo-Uganda frontier in pursuit of rebels under the terms of these [security] agreements

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[90] Clark. "Explaining Ugandan Intervention in Congo: Evidence and Interpretations": 268.
[91] Dunn. "A Survival Guide to Kinshasa: Lessons of the Father, Passed Down to the Son": 62; Nzongola-Ntalaja. From Zaire to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. 16; Nzongola-Ntalaja, "The International Dimensions of the Congo Crisis": 2.
[92] Clark. "Museveni's Adventure in the Congo War: Uganda's Vietnam?": 148. Timothy Longman. "The Complex Reasons for Rwanda's Engagement in Congo." The African Stakes of the Congo War. Ed. John F. Clark. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002: 130.
[93] Longman. "The Complex Reasons for Rwanda's Engagement in Congo": 133; Mwesiga Baregu. "Congo in the Great Lakes Conflict." Security Dynamics in Africa's Great Lakes Region. Ed. Gilbert M. Khadiagala. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2006: 62.
[94] Clark. "Museveni's Adventure in the Congo War: Uganda's Vietnam?": 148.

without engaging in all-out war against Kabila."[95] Furthermore, the UPDF would eventually be deployed more than 1,000 km in the Congo from Uganda (though the ADF rebels operated immediately across Uganda's western border),[96] while Rwandan troops were at one point over 2,000 km from Rwanda's western border with the DRC in their attempt to take Kinshasa (discussed below).[97]

Koen Vlassenroot writes that Kabila, in addition to being unable to fully control Congolese territory, angered Uganda by building closer relations with two of Museveni's "traditional enemies," the Central African Republic and Sudan. Kabila was also "no longer showing his generosity towards Ugandese economic actors for the exploitation of minerals in Northern Congo," and "even became an obstacle for Museveni's much wanted agenda for regional cooperation."[98] Nevertheless, Rwanda and Uganda's main grievance with their protégé was his assertion of an independent line from his foreign backers. "Since Kabila had not lived up to their expectations," Nzongola-Ntalaja writes, "Rwanda and Uganda were determined to find a new Congolese puppet, to fulfill their desire of having 'another Bizimungu in Kinshasa,'" a reference to Rwandan President Pasteur Bizimungu (1994-2000), perceived as merely a figurehead for Kagame's rule in Rwanda.[99]

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[95] Clark. "Explaining Ugandan Intervention in Congo: Evidence and Interpretations": 272-73.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Nzongola-Ntalaja. From Zaire to the Democratic Republic of the Congo: 16.
[98] Vlassenroot. "Identity and Insecurity. The Building of Ethnic Agendas in South Kivu": 276.
[99] Nzongola-Ntalaja. The Congo from Leopold to Kabila: A People's History: 227, 250*n36*.

### *1998: 'Africa's First World War' Begins*[100]

On 2 August, Rwandan and Ugandan troops invaded eastern DRC, as the Tenth Battalion of the *Armée Nationale Congolaise* (ANC) based in Goma, North Kivu, mutinied and joined the invaders.[101] The next day, the mutiny managed to capture a number of key eastern cities, such as Goma, Bukavu and Uvira.[102]

As in the Zairian War, Kabila's success during this time was due to indispensable support from outside powers. In early August, the invaders "adopted a daring strategy designed to decapitate the Kabila regime" in Kinshasa.[103] In what Herbert Weiss deems "a spectacular cross-continent air-lift," Kabarebe "commandeered" civilian planes filled with soldiers from Rwanda and Uganda, as well as Congolese rebels, across the DRC to the Kitona military base, west of the country's capital.[104] As the Kabila regime appeared likely to fall, Angola, Zimbabwe, and a small force from Namibia, halted the march to Kinshasa in the following weeks, depriving the Rwandan and Ugandan invaders of an early victory.[105] Chad, Eritrea and Sudan would soon briefly send troops to assist the Kabila regime against this aggression, while Burundi joined the invaders.[106]

On 15 August, Kabila's former foreign minister, Karaha, announced that opposition leaders had formed what would later become the *Rassemblement Congolais pour la*

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[100] Turner notes that "[a]ccording to journalist Lynne Duke, the expression [Africa's] 'first world war' originated with Susan Rice, US Assistant Secretary of State for Africa (Lynne Duke, *Mandela, Mobutu, and Me,* New York: Doubleday, 2003: 237)." Quoted in Turner. The Congo Wars: Conflict, Myth and Reality: 209.

[101] Nzongola-Ntalaja. The Congo from Leopold to Kabila: A People's History: 276; Nzongola-Ntalaja. "The International Dimensions of the Congo Crisis": 2; Nest et al. The Democratic Republic of Congo: Economic Dimensions of War and Peace: 25.

[102] Nest et al. The Democratic Republic of Congo: Economic Dimensions of War and Peace: 25

[103] Turner. The Congo Wars: Conflict, Myth and Reality. 5.

[104] Weiss. War and Peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. 14. Nzongola-Ntalaja. From Zaire to the Democratic Republic of the Congo: 16; Turner. The Congo Wars: Conflict, Myth and Reality: 5.

[105] Turner. The Congo Wars: Conflict, Myth and Reality: 6.

[106] Baregu. "Congo in the Great Lakes Conflict": 63; Nest et al. The Democratic Republic of Congo: Economic Dimensions of War and Peace: 26; Nzongola-Ntalaja. The Congo from Leopold to Kabila: A People's History: 227.

*Démocratie* (RCD), a rebel group designed to replace the government in Kinshasa.[107] Much like the AFDL, the RCD was little more than a means of providing a domestic face to a foreign invasion: the RCD was created and supported by Rwanda, as well as to a lesser extent by Uganda.[108] In May 1999, the RCD rebels split into several groups, the two most powerful being the RCD-Goma, backed by Rwanda, and the RCD-ML (*Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie – Mouvement de Libération*), supported by Uganda;[109] with the help of Rwandan and Ugandan troops, both of these rebel groups occupied large areas of eastern and north-eastern Congo, respectively.[110] Uganda also created and sponsored its own Congolese rebel movement, the *Mouvement de Libération du Congo* (MLC).[111] Along with the Rwandan and Ugandan armies, these and other rebel forces would play a central role in the protracted terrorism of Congolese citizens and militaristic economic exploitation of the Congo's natural wealth.

### *1999-2003: Positional Consolidation*

As the attempt to take Kinshasa failed due to other regional powers' intervention, the aggressors' military campaigns continued westward and southward from the Congo's eastern and northern border provinces, respectively, as they conquered and occupied increasing amounts of Congolese territory.

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[107] Nest et al. The Democratic Republic of Congo: Economic Dimensions of War and Peace: 25.
[108] Nzongola-Ntalaja. "The International Dimensions of the Congo Crisis": 2; Turner. The Congo Wars: Conflict, Myth and Reality: 6.
[109] Montague. "Stolen Goods: Coltan and Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo": 111; Nzongola-Ntalaja. The Congo from Leopold to Kabila: A People's History: 230.
[110] Gérard Prunier writes that RCD-Goma "controlled the largest area, extending from North Katanga to North Kivu with chunks of Maniema, Eastern Kasaï, and Province Orientale," while RCD-ML "controlled most of the area composed of Province Orientale" in north-eastern Congo. Gérard Prunjer. "The Economic Dimensions of Conflict in the Region." Security Dynamics in Africa's Great Lakes Region. Ed. Gilbert M. Khadiagala. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2006: 107.
[111] Turner. The Congo Wars: Conflict, Myth and Reality: 6.

Over the next several years, the DRC remained "de facto partitioned"[112] into three main zones. The first, controlled by Kabila's government and militarily assisted by his regional allies, covered the southern and western areas of the country. The second, occupied by Uganda and its 'rebel surrogate' the MLC, was a "swathe of the north." And third, Rwanda and its RCD proxies held much of the east.[113]

Fighting between those defending Kabila's regime and those seeking to overthrow it reached a stalemate by mid-1999.[114] In July, the main belligerents signed the *Lusaka Agreement*, which "was both a ceasefire agreement and a road map for the political transition in the Congo."[115] Unfortunately, the ceasefire stabilized the battle lines, leading to what Nzongola-Ntalaja terms "the phase of positional consolidation," lasting until 2003, as opposed to the first stage of the war, which he calls "the phase of frontal attacks."[116] As Nzongola-Ntalaja explains, the ceasefire allowed the combatants "to concentrate on consolidating their territorial positions and use them to illegally exploit Congo's natural resources and other forms of wealth,"[117] which became "a principal preoccupation," according to a UN Panel of Experts interim report.[118] Half of the Congo, the third largest country in Africa, was effectively under the occupation of foreign powers.[119] With the help of rebel groups, Uganda and Rwanda – countries roughly one

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[112] United Nations Security Council. "Interim report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of DR Congo." United Nations. 22 May 2002. Available from <http://wwww.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/AllDocsByUNID/91a2b0d15db86be9c1256bc700366dc1>.
[113] Turner. The Congo Wars: Conflict, Myth and Reality: 6-7; Ray. "U.S. Military and Corporate Recolonization of the Congo."
[114] Nest, et al. The Democratic Republic of Congo: Economic Dimensions of War and Peace: 26.
[115] Nzongola-Ntalaja. From Zaire to the Democratic Republic of the Congo: 18.
[116] Ibid.
[117] Ibid.
[118] United Nations Security Council. "Interim report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of DR Congo."
[119] Ray. "U.S. Military and Corporate Recolonization of the Congo"; Turner. The Congo Wars: Conflict, Myth and Reality: 24

tenth and one hundredth the size of the DRC, respectively – were thus able to control staggering expanses of a country approximately the size of Western Europe.[120]

### *2003-2008: The War Ends, the Conflict Continues*

The aforementioned period of 'positional consolidation' ended, at least officially, when, as stipulated by the Lusaka Agreement's road map, a transitional government was created in June 2003,[121] headed by Kabila's son, Joseph (as Laurent Kabila was assassinated in January 2001), assisted by four vice-presidents: the leader of the MLC rebels; the secretary general of the RCD-Goma rebels; a former head of the RCD rebels turned member of the unarmed opposition; and an ally of Joseph Kabila.[122] Yet despite this, the arrival and continued presence of a UN peacekeeping force (MONUC), peace agreements and the removal of foreign troops from Congolese soil, and the DRC's first democratic election in over 45 years, violence and instability remain, primarily in the east.[123]

Following the withdrawal of Rwanda and Uganda's armies from eastern and northern Congo in 2002 and 2003, respectively, these major participants in the Congo War left behind proxy rebel groups, some of which persist in terrorizing citizens in the east, and even exploit the Congo's wealth for their foreign backers. In the northeastern area of Ituri, for example, the Ugandan-sponsored *Front des Nationalistes et Intégrationnistes*

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[120] The DRC's area is 2,345,410 sq. km, while Uganda's is 236,040 sq. km, and Rwanda's is 26,338 sq. km. Turner. The Congo Wars: Conflict, Myth and Reality: 24-25.
[121] Nzongola-Ntalaja. From Zaire to the Democratic Republic of the Congo: 18.
[122] Turner. The Congo Wars: Conflict, Myth and Reality: 200, 202; "Profile: Congo opposition candidates." BBC. 25 July 2006. Available from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/5199518.stm>.
[123] "Conflict in Congo." International Crisis Group. February 2008. Available from <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=2829#C1>; "Congo election run-off slated for October." CBC. 20 August 2006. Available from <http://www.cbc.ca/world/story/2006/08/20/congo-sun.html>; Anna Husarska. "Congo's Neglected Tragedy." Washington Post. 12 January 2008.

(FNI) and the Rwandan-supported *Union des Patriotes Congolais* (UPC) fought numerous battles against each other for control over gold mining areas, with predictable effects on the region's stability and population.[124]

Peace continues to escape the provinces of North and South Kivu. Dissident General Laurent Nkunda's *Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple* (CNDP) rebel army, the *Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda* (FDLR), which has its roots in the execution of the Rwandan Genocide, and the Congolese "local resistance" militia known as the Maï-Maï[125] have clashed with each other and the Congolese army in these eastern provinces, recently forcing hundreds of thousands of civilians to flee their homes.[126]

In late January 2008, the prospects for an end to violence in eastern Congo appeared when 22 armed groups (including the CNDP) and the Congolese government signed a peace deal in Goma (North Kivu) which included a cease-fire, and the disarming and eventual inclusion of theses rebels into the Congolese army.[127] While it is unclear if the agreement will bring lasting peace to the troubled region, peace alone cannot be the only solution to eastern Congo's extremely high mortality rate, a product of the conflict's destruction of the area's economy and health system.

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[124] Human Rights Watch. The Curse of Gold: The Democratic Republic of Congo: 1-2.
[125] Turner. The Congo Wars: Conflict, Myth and Reality: 38; Jean-François Hugo. La République démocratique du Congo: une guerre inconnue. Paris: Éditions Michalon, 2006: 36-37.
[126] Husarska. "Congo's Neglected Tragedy."
[127] Lydia Polgreen. "Congo: Rebels Sign Deal To End Eastern Conflict." The New York Times. 24 January 2008; Rebecca Feeley and Colin Thomas-Jensen. "Past Due: Remove the FDLR from Eastern Congo." Enough Project. 3 June 2008: 3. Available from <http://www.enoughproject.org/files/reports/congo_fdlr_may_2008.pdf>.

### *Resource Exploitation*

Deemed a 'geological scandal' during the colonial era, the DRC is endowed with seemingly endless amounts of natural resources, including considerable amounts of cassiterite, cobalt, coltan, copper, diamonds, gold, manganese, niobium, tin, uranium, and zinc.[128] Perhaps Africa's richest country, the Congo is estimated to contain one-tenth of the world's copper deposits, a third of the world's cobalt, and more than half of the world's coltan.[129]

Coltan, a metallic ore composed of *col*ombium (also termed niobium) and *tan*talum, is nearly essential for high-technology.[130] The UN explains, "[w]hen refined, coltan becomes metallic tantalum, a heat-resistant powder that can hold a high electrical charge. These properties make it a vital element in creating capacitors, the electronic elements that control current flow inside miniature circuit boards."[131] It is found in such consumer electronics as cell-phones, computers and laptops, televisions, video game consoles, as well as fiber optics, capacitors, jet engines, ships, missiles and weapons systems.[132] Companies using coltan in their products include Compaq, Dell, Ericsson, Hewlett-Packard, IBM, Intel, Lucent, Microsoft, Motorola and Nokia,[133] though it is often unclear

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[128] Turner. The Congo Wars: Conflict, Myth and Reality: 26; Dena Montague and Frida Berrigan. "The Business of War in the Democratic Republic of Congo." Dollars and Sense Magazine. July/August 2001.
[129] Emily Wax. "Congo Practices a Wary Peace; Former Enemies, Still Fearful, Try to Move Country Forward." Washington Post. 5 November 2003; Franz Wild. "Congo Sets Up 'Task Force' to Study Review of Accords." Bloomberg. 18 March 2008. Available from <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601116&sid=aNgs63QdHslY&refer=africa>; Adam Hochschild. "Congo back on the brink II: The dark heart of mineral exploitation." International Herald Tribune. 24 December 2004.
[130] Montague. "Stolen Goods: Coltan and Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo": 105.
[131] "UN coltan explainer." United Nations. 20 November 2004. Available from <http://www.un.int/drcongo/war/coltan.htm>.
[132] Montague. "Stolen Goods: Coltan and Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo."
[133] Keith Harmon Snow and David Barouski. "Behind the Numbers: Untold Suffering in the Congo." ZNet. 1 March 2006. Available from <http://www.zmag.org/znet/viewArticle/4309>; Kristi Essick. "Guns, Money and Cell Phones." The Industry Standard. 11 June 2001. Available from <http://www.thestandard.com/article/0%2C1902%2C26784%2C00.html?page=0%2C0>.

if the coltan these corporations use ultimately comes from the DRC. "Tracing the coltan supply chain through the Congo is no simple task," writes Kristi Essick in *The Industry Standard*. Indeed, CEO of AVX, a producer of tantalum capacitors, Dick Rosen has acknowledged that "we don't have any idea where [the metal] comes from. There's no way to tell," and a spokesman for Compaq explains that "[m]ost of the components that we get [come] from third-party providers, so where they get their raw goods is hard to determine."[134]

The direct and indirect exploitation of Congo's resources by multinational corporations (discussed below) may have affected the amount of Western media coverage of the conflict. Since so many powerful companies may be benefiting from the war by using Congo's coltan, various media may not want to draw attention to this issue, as it might upset the myriad of high-technology companies advertising in these media.

***Rwandan, Ugandan, and Rebels' Exploitation of the Congo's Resources***

In April 2001, after six months of investigation, the UN Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth from the Democratic Republic of the Congo submitted its first of many reports to the UN Security Council.[135] It concluded that the conflict in the Congo "has become mainly about access, control and trade of five key mineral resources: coltan, diamonds, copper, cobalt and gold"; that the Congo's natural resources were being "physically exploited by the occupying forces, primarily Rwanda and Uganda, in conjunction with their respective

[134] Essick. "Guns, Money and Cell Phones"; Quoted in ibid.

[135] The UN Panel of Experts produced a total of four reports on the illegal exploitation of Congo's resources: a report (16 April 2001), an interim report (22 May 2002), and two final reports (16 October 2002, and 23 October 2003).

rebel counterparts" in the DRC; and that there is a clear link between such exploitation and the continuation of the conflict.[136]

This first UN Panel of Experts report discussed two phases of the "pilfering" of the Congo's wealth. The first, dubbed "mass-scale looting," occurred within the first year of the war, between September 1998 and August 1999, in which stockpiles of minerals, agricultural and forest products, and money were "drained" by the occupying powers and their rebel allies. For example, "Rwandan soldiers systematically targeted local banks as soon as they conquered a town" with the assistance of Rwandan-supported RCD rebel soldiers, with the same undertaken by the Ugandan-backed MLC rebels in different parts of the Congo. With the help of the RCD, Rwandan forces removed seven years' worth of coltan in stock from a Congolese company, and sent it to Rwanda.[137]

"When resource stockpiles were looted and exhausted by occupying forces and their [rebel] allies," the Panel of Experts report continues, "the exploitation evolved to an active extraction phase," one which the report calls the phase of "systematic and systemic exploitation." During this period, which continued until Rwanda and Uganda removed their soldiers from Congolese soil in 2002/03, vast sums of the Congo's resources were extracted, sent to Uganda and Rwanda, and then exported. In fact, there is a strong correlation between these two countries' military occupation of eastern and northern Congo and the rise in their exports of particular resources. For Uganda, export figures for gold were "consistently greater than production values," with sharp rises in exports occurring in 1999 and 2000. During this time, the price of coltan "substantial[ly] increased," with the report estimating that Rwanda's army, the Rwandan Patriotic Army

[136] United Nations Security Council. "Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo."
[137] Ibid.

(RPA), "must have made at least $250 million over a period of 18 months" from the Congo's coltan, which was considered "substantial enough to finance the war"; indeed, Rwandan President Kagame described the conflict as a "self-financing war." Both countries have also exported considerable amounts of diamonds during their occupation of the Congo – even though neither of these countries have any domestic diamond production.[138] The drive to pillage the Congo's resources even drove former allies Rwanda and Uganda to go to war against each other on three separate occasions between 1999 and 2000 over control of the lucrative diamond trading city of Kisangani.[139] The predation became so extensive that the Panel of Experts report wrote that Kagame and Ugandan President Museveni were "on the verge of becoming the godfathers of the illegal exploitation of natural resources and the continuation of the conflict" in the DRC. As well, both the economies of Rwanda and Uganda financially benefited from this pillaging.[140]

Armed groups, some directly supported by Rwanda and/or Uganda, have also benefited considerably from illegally exploiting the Congo's wealth. The rebel MLC, which controlled and exploited a "swathe of the north" of the DRC,[141] engaged in resource exploitation, and gave itself the right to grant mining concessions and "the opportunities to carry out business activities" to traders and businessmen, in exchange for some military items. Additionally, the MLC implemented a "system of tax

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[138] United Nations Security Council. "Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo"; Quoted in ibid.
[139] Nzongola-Ntalaja. From Zaire to the Democratic Republic of the Congo: 16; Nzongola-Ntalaja. "The International Dimensions of the Congo Crisis": 3, 5; Christian Dietrich. "The Use of Regional Diamond Trading Platforms to Access Conflict Zones." African Security Review. Vol 13 No 1, 2004: 55. Available from <http://www.iss.co.za/pubs/ASR/13No1/EDietrich.pdf>.
[140] United Nations Security Council. "Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo"
[141] Turner. The Congo Wars: Conflict, Myth and Reality: 6.

collection," which, the UN report notes, "[i]n the rebels own words…[were] aimed at 'financing or supporting the war effort,'" with part of these funds sent to Kampala.[142] The RCD-Goma found ample profits by exploiting the Congo's coltan and diamonds, with the group's leader boasting that "We raise more or less $200,000 per month from diamonds…Coltan gives us more: a million dollars a month." Coltan and taxing of trade were the RCD-ML's "major economic activities"; "[e]ntrepreneurs importing goods from Uganda into the DRC," Nest writes, "were required to pay a fee averaging $8,000 per container to the RCD-ML,"[143] which also exploited gold, and harvested timber which "exclusively transited or remained in Uganda."[144] The Maï-Maï have also been extracting coltan, and were found to be doing business with RPA civilian coltan dealers.[145]

***Multinational Corporations and War Profiteering***

In addition to neighbouring states and armed groups, numerous multinational corporations have also exploited Congo's natural wealth during the conflict, leading some to argue that they have been profiting from the war. In its third report, the UN Panel of Experts concluded that in their business dealings with the Congo, 85 companies from the U.S., UK, Belgium, Germany, Canada and other countries had violated the Organisation

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[142] United Nations Security Council. "Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo."
[143] Nest, et al. The Democratic Republic of Congo: Economic Dimensions of War and Peace: 47; Quoted in ibid.
[144] Human Rights Watch. The Curse of Gold: The Democratic Republic of Congo: 23; United Nations Security Council. "Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo."
[145] United Nations Security Council. "Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo."

for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises.

Some of the U.S. corporations include Eagle Wings Resources International (which 'collaborated' "with [the] RPA to receive privileged access to coltan sites and captive labour"); the OM Group (which ran "one of the most profitable mining operations" from the DRC); Trinitech International (coltan trader and parent company of Eagle Wings); Vishay Sprague (capacitor manufacturer); and Cabot Corporation (the world's largest refiner of coltan).[146] Canadian companies include First Quantum Minerals, Tenke Mining Corporation and other mining companies. Barclays Bank, chemical giant Bayer A.G., and diamond miner and trader De Beers were also named.[147]

In its 2005 report titled *The Curse of Gold*, HRW noted that one of the world's largest gold producers, AngloGold Ashanti, provided logistical and financial support to the Ugandan proxy militia, the FNI, "an armed group responsible for serious human rights abuses including war crimes and crimes against humanity," in its gold exploration activities in northeastern Congo.[148] Swiss refinery Metalor Technologies was found to be buying gold from Uganda, which "came from a conflict zone in northeastern DRC where human rights were abused on a systematic basis," and thus "may have contributed indirectly to providing a revenue stream for armed groups that carry out widespread human rights abuses." HRW made clear that "[t]he chain of Congolese middlemen,

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[146] United Nations, Security Council. "Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of DR Congo." United Nations. 16 October 2002. Available from <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/AllDocsByUNID/706b89b947e5993dc1256c590052b353>; Jim Lobe. "Global Businesses Profit from Congo War, Groups Charge." OneWorld US. 28 October 2003. Available from <http://us.oneworld.net/article/view/71424/1/>.

[147] United Nations, Security Council. "Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of DR Congo."

[148] Human Rights Watch. The Curse of Gold: Democratic Republic of Congo: 1-2.

Ugandan traders, and multinational corporations forms an important funding network for armed groups operating in northeastern Congo."[149]

The reasons for these and many other companies' business interests in the conflict in Congo are clear: as author Adam Hochschild argues, "the Balkanization and war suit the amazing variety of corporations…that profit from the river of mineral wealth without having to worry about high taxes, and that prefer a cash-in-suitcases economy to a highly regulated one" which "would tightly control natural resources."[150] Multinational corporations have thus been rather interested in the DRC's natural wealth, and have been quick to capitalize on the business opportunities available during the conflict, even when doing so contributes to mass-scale violence against innocent civilians.

***Resource Exploitation and Western Consumption***

The important relationship between the conflict, the exploitation of the Congo's natural wealth by its neighbours, armed groups and multinational corporations, and Western consumers cannot be overemphasized. While some of the minerals that have been looted from the Congo are luxury goods, such as gold and diamonds, meaning they are consumed by the relatively privileged, coltan, perhaps more than any other resource exploited in the conflict in the Congo, has direct relations with the products regularly bought by Western consumers. As mentioned, coltan is found in many of our high-tech goods, such as cell-phones, computers, DVD players, and video game consoles. In fact, half of the $6 billion annual market worth of tantalum is "used in the annual manufacture of nearly 1 billion cell phones"; as well, as journalist Johann Hari notes, the "[g]lobal

[149] Ibid.: 3.
[150] Adam Hochschild. "Chaos in Congo Suits Many Parties Just Fine." New York Times. 20 April 2003; Hochschild. "Congo back on the brink II: The dark heart of mineral exploitation."

demand for coltan was soaring throughout the war because of the massive popularity of coltan-filled Sony Playstations."[151] As such, an important question we must ask ourselves – as consumers of some of these high-tech products – is: to what extent have we been unwittingly contributing to the bloodshed in the DRC?

### *The Role of the U.S.*

The United States has had an important role in the Congo War, including providing military and diplomatic support for some of the key belligerents involved in the conflict. According to a January 2000 World Policy Institute report, the U.S. bears considerable responsibility for the conflict, since it "has helped build the arsenals of eight of the nine governments directly involved in the war."[152] With an emphasis on the conflict's major combatants, total U.S. arms transfers (foreign military sales plus commercial sales) between 1989 and 1998 to Burundi amounted to $386,000; to Rwanda, $324,000; and for Uganda, over $11.4 million. On the other side of the conflict, Angola received $31,000; Namibia obtained over $4.2 million; and Zimbabwe nearly $1.4 million. Through the U.S.'s International Military Education and Training (IMET) program during the same period, Burundi obtained over $1.3 million worth of U.S. military training; Rwanda, over $1.4m; and Uganda, nearly $4m. To those fighting these aggressors, Angola received

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[151] Casey Bush and Joshua Seeds. "Apocalypse Found: Coltan, Cell Phones and Crisis in the Congo." The Bear Deluxe Magazine. 19 April 2008. Available from <http://www.commondreams.org/archive/2008/04/19/8389/>; Johann Hari. "Congo's tragedy: the war the world forgot." The Independent. 5 May 2006.

[152] William D. Hartung and Bridget Moix. "Deadly Legacy: U.S. Arms to Africa and the Congo War." World Policy Institute. January 2000. <http://www.worldpolicy.org/projects/arms/reports/congo.htm>.

$177,000; Namibia nearly $1.6 million; and Zimbabwe over $2.6 million worth of U.S. military training.[153]

U.S. military assistance to Rwanda provides an interesting example. After the 1994 Rwandan genocide, the U.S. became increasingly close to the new Rwandan government. The US "pumped military aid"[154] into Rwanda's army, which helped train hundreds of soldiers and officers. Some Rwandan units obtained combat training by US Army Special Forces; through a Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET) program, the students "studied camouflage techniques, small-unit movement…rappelling, mountaineering, marksmanship, weapon maintenance, and day and night navigation," according to journalist Lynn Duke.[155] U.S. military training was not terminated when Rwandan soldiers participated in the Zairian War, but in fact continued after the war; at least one JCET program took place in 1998. Senior Rwandan military policymakers also obtained military education from the U.S. Maj. Gen. Paul Kagame, who succeeded Bizimungu as president of Rwanda in 2000, obtained military training at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, before the RPF unsuccessfully tried to overthrow the Rwandan government in 1990. Lt. Col. Frank Rusagara – who at the time of the start of the Congo War was the secretary general of the Rwandan Defense Ministry – spent three months in early 1997 at the U.S. Naval Post-Graduate School in Monterey, California, obtaining "defense resource management training."[156]

When the war in the Congo began, U.S. Special Forces "maintained a visible presence in both Rwanda and Uganda," perhaps indicating that the U.S. gave "at least

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[153] Ibid.
[154] Lynn Duke. "U.S. Faces Surprise, Dilemma in Africa." Washington Post. 14 July 1998.
[155] Ibid.
[156] Ibid.; See also Lynn Duke. "U.S. Military Role in Rwanda Greater than Disclosed." Washington Post. 16 August 1997.

tacit approval" to the endeavor.[157] Indeed, four days after the war started, the Pentagon's spokesperson, Dunn notes, reported that a U.S. military ""assessment team' had been at the Rwandan border near Goma at the time the Rwandan troops were crossing into the DRC."[158]

Diplomatically, at least during the Clinton Administration, Rwanda and Uganda were considered to be the U.S.'s "staunchest allies in the region," even its "staunchest African allies."[159] As HRW notes, when the war began, the U.S. "initially adopted a remarkable silence on the two countries' military involvement." In fact, a State Department spokesman did not acknowledge that Rwanda and Uganda had invaded the DRC until August 19 1998, more than two weeks after the war began, "and even then it was couched in terms apparently intended to justify their actions."[160] U.S. diplomatic support for these two countries did not end with the Clinton Administration. Nzongola-Ntalaja notes that in May 2001 during a visit to Uganda, for example, then U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell 'dismissed' "media questioning about the crimes committed in the DRC by Uganda and Rwanda."[161]

Several reasons are provided for the US's tacit support. For one, "Kabila's incompetence, erratic behaviour and friendship with states to which the US is hostile such as Cuba, Libya and Sudan," Nzongola-Ntalaja writes, "did not endear him to American

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[157] Dunn. "A Survival Guide to Kinshasa: Lessons of the Father, Passed Down to the Son": 65.
[158] Ibid.
[159] Human Rights Watch. Human Rights Watch World Report 1999: Events of December 1997-November 1998. New York: Human Rights Watch, December 1998: 39; Norimitsu Onishi. "Pressure Rises on Outsiders in Congo War." New York Times. 17 April, 2001.
[160] Human Rights Watch. Human Rights Watch World Report 1999: Events of December 1997-November 1998: 39.
[161] Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja. "War, Peace and Democracy in the Democratic Republic of Congo." World Political Science Review. Vol. 2: Iss. 3, Article 3. 2006: 228.

policymakers."[162] Furthermore, Uganda and Rwanda are seen as "guardians on the frontline *vis-à-vis* the Islamist threat from Sudan"[163]; in fact, prior to the Zairian War, the U.S. was providing "massive military, economic and political assistance" to Uganda to contain Sudan's National Islamic Front regime.[164] The U.S. is also interested in "maintaining access to the strategic resources" found in the DRC, which may be assured by supporting Rwanda and Uganda.[165] Despite laudable American efforts to broker a cease-fire and peaceful resolution to the war, the U.S.'s "role in fueling the country's political instability and violent conflict"[166] must not be overlooked.

Following Herman and Chomsky's explanations for the relatively little media coverage of the Indonesian invasion of East Timor, the U.S.'s harmful role in the war in the Congo may have affected American news media's coverage of the conflict. In the case of East Timor, the U.S.'s considerable diplomatic and military support to Indonesia is seen as a major factor in explaining the mainstream media's levels of coverage of the atrocities in East Timor, since media attention to the conflict would have embarrassed the U.S.'s ally and revealed American support for large-scale violence.[167] As such, media coverage of Indonesia's invasion and occupation remained minimal.[168] Given the U.S.'s diplomatic and military relations with Rwanda and Uganda, the American media may have similarly assisted the U.S. government by ensuring that it would not be embarrassed by high-levels of coverage of the conflict in the Congo.

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[162] Nzongola-Ntalaja. The Congo from Leopold to Kabila: A People's History: 233.
[163] Ibid.
[164] Otunnu. "Uganda as a Regional Actor in the Zairian War." 49.
[165] Nzongola-Ntalaja. The Congo from Leopold to Kabila: A People's History: 233; For more on Congo's natural resources, please see section below: "Resource Exploitation."
[166] Hartung and Moix. "Deadly Legacy: U.S. Arms to Africa and the Congo War."
[167] Herman and Chomsky. Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media: 302
[168] For more on this, please see the following section in this thesis' Introduction: "Methodological and Theoretical Framework."

### *Sexual Violence against Women: The 'War Within a War'*

Particular emphasis must be placed on the effects that the conflict in the Congo has had on women and girls, since they are seen as "bear[ing] the vicious brunt" of the crisis in Congo.[169] Throughout the conflict, hundreds of thousands of women and girls of nearly all ages[170] have been the victims of the "sexual violence pandemic,"[171] carried out by all sides of the conflict.[172] Considered by HRW to be "a weapon of war" in their report titled *The War within the War*, the International Crisis Group notes that sexual violence against women and girls in the Congo has been "the most common form of violence" and "the most widespread form of criminality" during the conflict.[173] In the eastern province of South Kivu alone, for example, an estimated 27,000 women were the victims of rape in 2006, while approximately 45,000 women were raped in 2005[174] – after the war had officially ended. In all the countries in which it works, *Médecins sans Frontières* (MSF) finds that 75% of all the rape cases that it treats are in eastern Congo.[175] Moreover, considering an estimated 60 percent of all combatants in the conflict are infected with HIV/AIDS, and since expensive antiretroviral drugs tend to be out of reach for most women, sexual violence in the DRC "all too often become automatic death sentences." Not only has the perceived purpose of sexual violence against women and girls been "to

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[169] Rebecca Feeley and Colin Thomas-Jensen. "Getting Serious about Ending Conflict and Sexual Violence in Congo." Enough Project. 19 March 2008: 2. Available from <http://www.enoughproject.org/files/reports/CongoSerious.pdf>.

[170] Chris McGreal. "Hundreds of thousands of women raped for being on the wrong side." The Guardian. 12 November 2007. Available from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2007/nov/12/congo.international>.

[171] Feeley and Thomas-Jensen. "Getting Serious about Ending Conflict and Sexual Violence in Congo": 2.

[172] Nadine Puechguirbal. "Women and War in the Democratic Republic of the Congo." Journal of Women in Culture and Society. 28, 4 (2003): 1274.

[173] Human Rights Watch. The War Within the War: Sexual Violence Against Women and Girls in Eastern Congo. New York: Human Rights Watch, June 2002: 23. Available from <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2002/drc/>; International Crisis Group. "Beyond Victimhood: Women's Peacebuilding in Sudan, Congo and Uganda." Africa Report. No. 112. 28 June 2006: 9, 8.

[174] Jeffrey Gettleman. "Rape Epidemic Raises Trauma of Congo War." New York Times. 7 October 2007; Hari. "Congo's tragedy: the war the world forgot."

[175] McGreal. "Hundreds of thousands of women raped for being on the wrong side."

terrorize, humiliate and punish," the actions themselves, Yakin Erturk, special rapporteur for the United Nations Human Rights Council on violence against women, says, "are of an unimaginable brutality that goes far beyond rape."[176]

### *The Human Cost of the War*

In order to determine the number of casualties that the war was producing, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) conducted five mortality surveys in the DRC between 2000 and 2007. In the first, published in May 2000, the IRC found that the conflict had claimed an estimated 1.7 million lives in the 22 months since the war started in August 1998. In what would become a regular facet of the conflict, the majority of these deaths were not caused by violence, but from malnutrition and disease due to the breakdown in the health system and the sharp decline in food availability caused by the war.[177] The following year, the IRC concluded that the war's death toll had by May 2001 killed 2.5 million; in November 2002, the number rose to 3.3 million deaths, arguably making it the highest conflict-related death toll since the Second World War. In 2006, the IRC estimated that by 2004, 3.9 million people had died as a result of the conflict.[178]

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[176] Jan Goodwin. "Silence=Rape." The Nation. 8 March 2004; Quoted in Robert Evans. "Violence against women 'beyond rape' in Congo – U.N." Reuters. 30 July 2007. Available from <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L30471668.htm>.

[177] Les Roberts. "Mortality in Eastern DRC. Results from Five Mortality Surveys by the International Rescue Committee May 2000." Bukavu, DR Congo: International Rescue Committee. May 2000. Available from <http://www.theirc.org/resources/mortality_I_report.pdf>; Turner. The Congo Wars: Conflict, Myth and Reality: 3.

[178] "Mortality Study, Eastern D.R. Congo (February-April 2001)." International Rescue Committee. 8 May 2001. Available from <http://www.theirc.org/media/www/mortality_study_eastern_dr_congo_februaryapril_2001.html>; "Conflict in Congo Deadliest Since World War II, Says The IRC: Tenuous Peace Process Needs International Support." International Rescue Committee; Benjamin Coghlan et al. "Mortality in the Democratic Republic of Congo: a nationwide survey." The Lancet. 7 January 2006. Vol. 367 Issue 9504: 44-51.

In January 2008, the IRC released its most recent study, which concluded that between August 1998 and April 2007, the conflict in the Congo and the humanitarian disaster that it produced has led to an astonishing 5.4 million dead. The study added that an "estimated 2.1 million of those deaths have occurred since the formal end of war in 2002," and that 45,000 people continue to die every month[179] – an average of 1,500 deaths every day.

## Summary

After decades of enduring extreme poverty and despotism under the Western-backed dictator Mobutu, Congolese citizens are faced with renewed misery, as their country has been the exclusive battleground of Africa's biggest war. Displeased with the rebel leader they chose to remove Mobutu, Rwanda and Uganda invaded the DRC in 1998, commencing a war that has involved ten armies and millions of lives. Failing to overthrow their protégé Kabila, Kagame and Museveni focused their military efforts on consolidating the mineral rich areas of eastern Congo, where they plundered millions of dollars worth of the DRC's natural resources, especially its coltan, gold, diamonds, copper and cobalt. Thanks to the lawlessness in the occupied zones, multinational corporations have profited from the Congo's resources as well, by investing in mining ventures, unburdened by taxes and environmental and labour laws. Other companies may also have benefited, by using coltan in their products that may eventually come from the Congo, though the murky supply chains make it difficult to know for certain. Women and

[179] Benjamin Coghlan et al. "Mortality in the Democratic Republic of Congo: An Ongoing Crisis." International Rescue Committee. 2008: ii. Available from <http://www.theirc.org/resources/2007/2006-7_congomortalitysurvey.pdf>; "Special Report: Congo." International Rescue Committee. 2008. Available from <http://www.theirc.org/special-report/congo-forgotten-crisis.html>.

girls have been subjected to indescribable brutality, as hundreds of thousands have become the victims of sexual violence.

It would thus be surprising that the conflict, as some suggest,[180] has not generated significant media coverage. As this chapter has shown, the nearly ten years of war in the DRC, including all of its intertwined aspects, is exceedingly newsworthy. As such, to determine if, as Andrew Stroehlein asserts, the "Western media generally do not cover the ongoing war" in the Congo,[181] the following chapter explores the amount of coverage that two of the U.S.'s most influential newspapers, the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*,[182] have given to 'Africa's first world war,' in comparison to their coverage of other conflicts occurring at approximately the same time.

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[180] For more on this, please see the Introduction.
[181] Stroehlein. "In Congo, 1,000 die per day: Why isn't it a media story?"
[182] Ben Bagdikian. The Media Monopoly. Boston: Beacon Press, 1983: 24-25.

# Chapter 2

# Comparing the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*'s Coverage of the Conflicts in the Congo, Darfur and Kosovo

Having reviewed the history of the war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, this chapter seeks to determine if and to what extent the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* have underreported the conflict. Determining if the Congo War has indeed received low levels of media attention requires using Herman and Chomsky's methodology of paired examples: comparing the amount of media attention given to the conflict in the DRC in contrast to the coverage accorded to other conflicts which occurred at approximately the same time. As such, coverage of the Congo War will be compared with coverage of the conflict in the Kosovo region of the former Yugoslavia – hereafter referring to both the conflicts between Serbian forces and the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) guerilla group, and between Serbian forces and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). While such a comparison may be perceived as an inadequate means of determining if the war in the DRC has been underreported in the selected newspapers, since Kosovo is in Europe, the amount of coverage of the Congo conflict is then compared with the amount of coverage received by a conflict occurring in the same region as the Congo, the Darfur region of Sudan. This chapter ends with a discussion of some of the potential explanations for the results.

## Hypotheses

This chapter tests the following four hypotheses:

H1: Collectively, the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* have published fewer news stories on the conflict in the Congo than on the conflict in Kosovo.

H2: Collectively, the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* have published fewer editorials, opinion pieces and columns on the conflict in the Congo than on the conflict in Kosovo.

H3: Collectively, the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* have published fewer news stories on the conflict in the Congo than on the conflict in Darfur.

H4: Collectively, the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* have published fewer editorials, opinion pieces and columns on the conflict in the Congo than on the conflict in Darfur.

## Methodology

The data were obtained by examining the *Times* and the *Post* for coverage of the conflicts in the Congo, Kosovo and Darfur, using the *Factiva* news database. The *Times* and *Post* were chosen because they are perceived to be the two leading and arguably most influential newspapers in the United States[183]; as two of the "agenda-setting media," they

[183] Robert M. Entman. Projections of Power: Framing News, Public Opinion, and U.S. Foreign Policy. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004: 11; Ben Bagdikian. The Media Monopoly. Boston: Beacon Press, 1983: 24-25.

can have strong influence on other and especially smaller American news media[184]; and as newspapers they "have the organizational capacity to feature longer stories, more background and analysis."[185]

To determine the visibility of the war in the Congo in the *Times* and *Post*, the term "Congo" (but not "Congo Republic" or "Republic of Congo," as this is another country) was searched for in the headline or first two paragraphs of a story (what *Factiva* terms 'headline and lead paragraph') in all sections of these newspapers, between 4 August 1998, when the war was first reported on, and 31 January 2008. The latter date was chosen since in late January 2008 the Congolese government signed a peace agreement with armed groups to, as the *Times* reported, "end fighting in the last remaining war zone in the country,"[186] and because it marked 9.5 years since the conflict began. In order to obtain stories pertaining to the conflict, all articles that included the term "Congo" as well as such terms as "atrocities," "invasion," "war," "strife," "rebels," "militias, "peace," "cease-fire," and others,[187] in the headline or first two paragraphs, were selected. These

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[184] Chomsky notes that the agenda-setting media "are a number of major media outlets that end up setting a basic framework that other smaller media units more or less have to adapt to. The larger media have the essential resources, and other smaller media scattered around the country pretty much have to take the framework which the major outlets present and adapt to it – because if the newspapers in Pittsburgh or Salt Lake City want to know about Angola...very few of them are going to be able to send their own correspondents and have their own analysts." Noam Chomsky. Understanding Power: The Indispensable Chomsky. Peter R. Mitchell and John Schoeffel, eds. New York: The New Press, 2002: 14; Moreover, Anthony Smith writes that "There is a simple economic reason why so few newspapers manage to provide their international news for themselves. It costs anything up to $150,000 [1980 U.S. dollars] a year to maintain a correspondent in a foreign capital....Even in the prosperous Western world, only a handful of newspapers keep a full team of correspondents, and many of those, such as the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Observer*, and Times Newspapers eke out the costs by selling their news to other non-competing newspapers." Anthony Smith. The Geopolitics of Information: How Western Culture Dominates the World. New York: Oxford University Press, 1980: 68-69; Michael Parenti. Inventing Reality: The Politics of the Mass Media. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986: x.

[185] Linda Trimble and Shannon Sampert. "Who's in the Game? The Framing of the Canadian Election 2000 by *The Globe and Mail* and *The National Post*." Canadian Journal of Political Science. 37:1 (March 2004): 55.

[186] Lydia Polgreen. "Congo: Rebels Sign Deal To End Eastern Conflict." The New York Times. 24 January 2008.

[187] For a full list of terms used, see Appendix 1.

terms were chosen because they signal to readers that a violent conflict is occurring in the country. Although readers will often only read a story's headline,[188] to expand the likelihood that readers will be informed of the existence of the conflict, stories which contained the terms in their first two paragraphs were included, since readers may similarly only read an article's opening paragraphs.

In obtaining stories on the conflict in the Kosovo province of Serbia, however, the methodology was altered since a number of articles in the early years of the conflict, as well as when NATO was at war with Yugoslavia, did not contain any of the terms used to find stories on the conflict in the Congo. As such, a second list of terms was required, which included such terms as "violence," "mass execution(s)," "(air) strikes," "bombing(s)," and others,[189] in addition to using the first set of terms.[190] The time frame was 1 April 1996, the month in which the ethically Albanian KLA guerilla group first claimed attacks against Serbian forces and officially announced its armed struggle, to 30 June 1999, after NATO ended its bombing campaign against Yugoslavia.[191]

The same terms as those used to find stories on the Congo conflict were used to obtain stories on the conflict in Sudan's western Darfur region, though the timeframe was adjusted to fit with the conflict's commencement: 1 February 2003[192] to 31 January 2008.

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[188] Teun van Dijk. Racism and the Press. London and New York: Routledge, 1991: 50. Van Dijk also writes that headlines "are usually read first and the information expressed in the headline is strategically used by the reader during the process of understanding in order to construct the overall meaning, or the main topics, of the rest of the text before the text itself is even read."

[189] For a full list of terms used, see Appendix 1.

[190] This second list of terms was not needed to find stories on the conflicts in the Congo and Darfur, as these stories on the two conflicts included the first set of terms.

[191] Howard Clark. Civil Resistance in Kosovo. London: Pluto Press, 2000: xviii; While in her history of Kosovo Miranda Vickers notes that in 1995 the KLA moved from murders to organized attacks, it was in April 1996 that the guerilla group officially announced that it was "operating a struggle for the liberation of Kosovo that would continue until complete independence." Miranda Vickers, quoted in Noam Chomsky. The New Military Humanism: Lessons from Kosovo. Monroe, ME: Common Courage Press, 1999: 30.

[192] Samuel Totten and Eric Markusen, eds. Genocide in Darfur: Investigating the Atrocities in the Sudan. New York: Routledge, 2006: xix.

The same methodologies were used to obtain opinion pieces (columns, editorials and op-eds) on these three conflicts. For both the news stories and opinion pieces, the number of articles was organized by month.

The following three measures are used to determine if the four hypotheses have been supported: fewer stories and opinion pieces on the conflict in the Congo than on the conflicts in Kosovo and Darfur (1) in a majority of months in which the two conflicts occurred simultaneously; (2) in total; and (3) in mean average number of stories per month.[193]

It should be noted that stories that were *not* on these conflicts but contained one or more of the above terms in the headline or first two paragraphs were not included because it is clear that they are discussing another issue, and happen to include one of the terms along with the term "Congo," "Kosovo" or "Darfur."

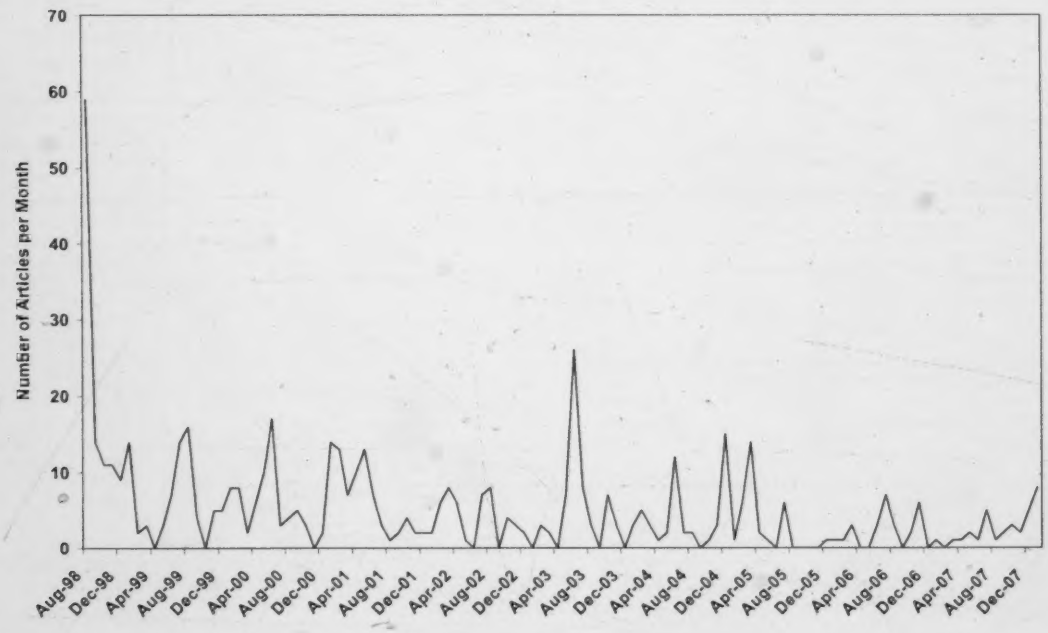
## Results

Figure 2.1 shows the combined number of news articles that the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* published per month between August 1998 and January 2008 on the conflict in the Congo. As it demonstrates, a high number of stories appeared in August 1998, the first month of the conflict, with the *Times* running 33 pieces and the *Post* producing 26, totaling 59. However, the amount of articles per month quickly declines to a total of fourteen stories in September, and eleven in October, roughly one fourth and one fifth of the number of stories in August, respectively. Over the 114 months studied,

[193] While mean averages (total number of stories divided by the number of months) are used to test the hypotheses, the mode (the most frequently occurring number of stories per month) and the median (the number of stories per month found in the middle, when all the values are arranged by size) are also discussed.

these two media ran a combined total of 567 stories on the Congo conflict, producing an average of just under five stories per month. The mean without August 2008, which produced by far the highest number of stories per month of all the months studied, is 4.5 stories per month.[194] The median and the mode, with and without August 1998, are three and zero stories per month, respectively.

**Figure 2.1.** *Number of Articles per Month on the Conflict in the Congo in the* New York Times *and the* Washington Post, *August 1998 – January 2008*




How does this compare with these two newspapers' coverage of another conflict occurring at approximately the same time?

[194] Mean average number of stories per month on the conflict in the Congo for both these media over the 114 months studied was 4.973. When removing August 1998, the mean average number of stories declines slightly to 4.495 per month.

**Figure 2.2.** *Number of Articles per Month on the Conflicts in the Congo and Kosovo in the* New York Times *and the* Washington Post, *April 1996 – January 2008*

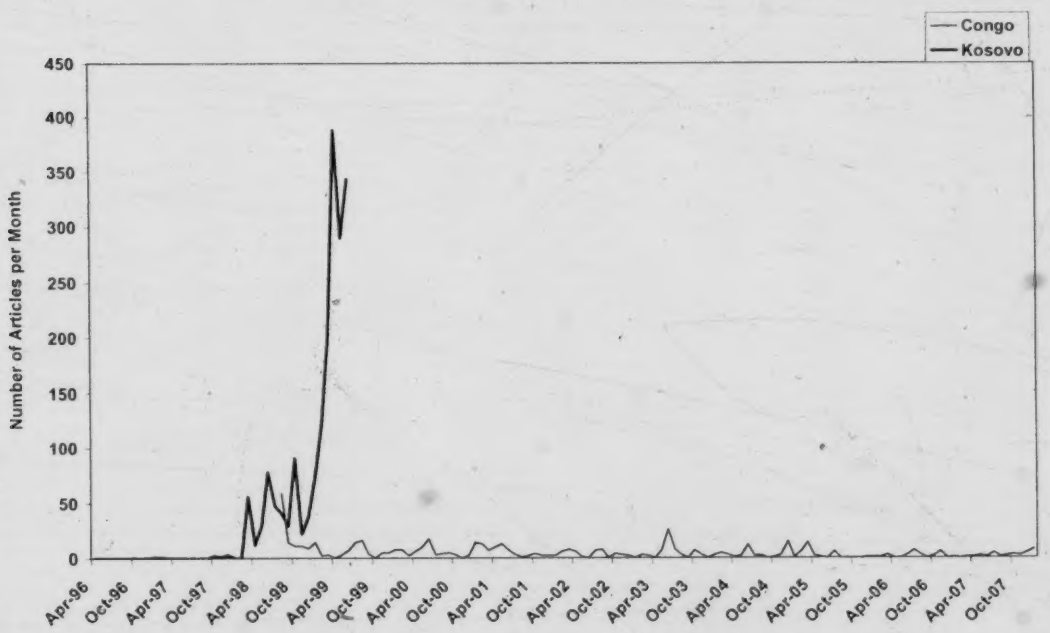



Figure 2.2 juxtaposes the number of articles per month on the wars in the Congo and Kosovo for the respective duration of these two conflicts.[195] As it shows, the number of stories per month on the conflict in Kosovo surpassed the number on the conflict in the Congo for all but one (August 1998) of the eleven months in which these two conflicts occurred simultaneously. In the 39 months between April 1996 and June 1999, there were a total of 1,864 news stories on the conflict in Kosovo; in contrast, in the 114 months between August 1998 and January 2008, there were 567 articles on the conflict in the Congo. That is, there were more than three times as many stories on the Kosovo war than on the Congo conflict, in roughly one third of the time. While there was an average of

[195] While acknowledging that violence and insecurity continues in eastern Congo, please see the methodology section regarding why this thesis' research on media coverage on the conflict in the Congo ends on 31 January 2008.

approximately 5 stories per month on the war in the Congo, there were nearly 48 per month on the conflict in Kosovo.[196] As such, the data supports this chapter's first hypothesis (H1). As the graph indicates, however, the data for the Kosovo war is quite skewed, given the low number of stories in the first 23 months of the conflict, between April 1996 and February 1998, and the sharp rise between February and June 1999.

**Figure 2.3.** *Number of Articles per Month on the Conflicts in the Congo and Kosovo in the* New York Times *and the* Washington Post, *April 1996 – February 1999*

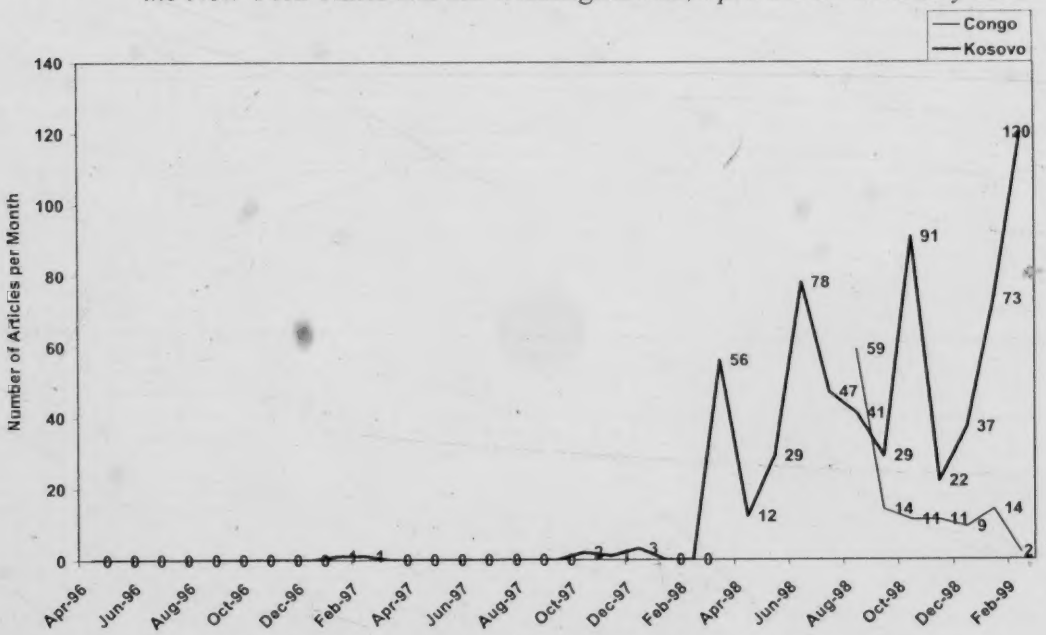



Figure 2.3 focuses on these newspapers' coverage of the conflicts in the Congo and Kosovo prior to March 1999. Figure 2.3 was included in order to demonstrate the comparative amounts of coverage given to these conflicts before NATO began bombing Yugoslavia on March 24th, which is assumed to increase the amount of coverage of the conflict in Kosovo. Since my research examines the number of stories per month, the

[196] The average number of stories in the *Times* and the *Post* in the 39 months between April 1996 and June 1999 was 47.794 per month.

entire month of March, along with the following three months, were excluded. As it demonstrates, the number of stories per month on the war in Kosovo in the twelve months between March 1998 – when the number of stories per month shot up to 56 from zero in the previous two months and less than four throughout the months before – and February 1999, surpassed the number of articles per month on the conflict in the Congo in its first seven months, with the exceptions of April and August 1998. In fact, excluding August 1998, once coverage of Kosovo spikes in March 1998, only twice until the end of the conflict in June does it receive fewer stories per month than did the Congo conflict in any month throughout the latter's 9.5 years (see Figure 2.2).[197]

How does the amount of news coverage compare with the number of opinion pieces on these two conflicts? As Figure 2.4 shows, the number of columns, editorials and op-eds per month on the conflict in the DRC compared with those on the conflict in Kosovo is similar to what we see with news coverage (Figure 2.2). The number of opinion pieces on the Congo conflict reached its highest in August 1998 with a total of six, and then drops to zero in September, one in October, and zero for the year's remaining two months. For the conflict's nine and a half years there was a total of 78 opinion pieces, producing an average of less than one opinion piece per month on the conflict.[198] The median and mode were zero.

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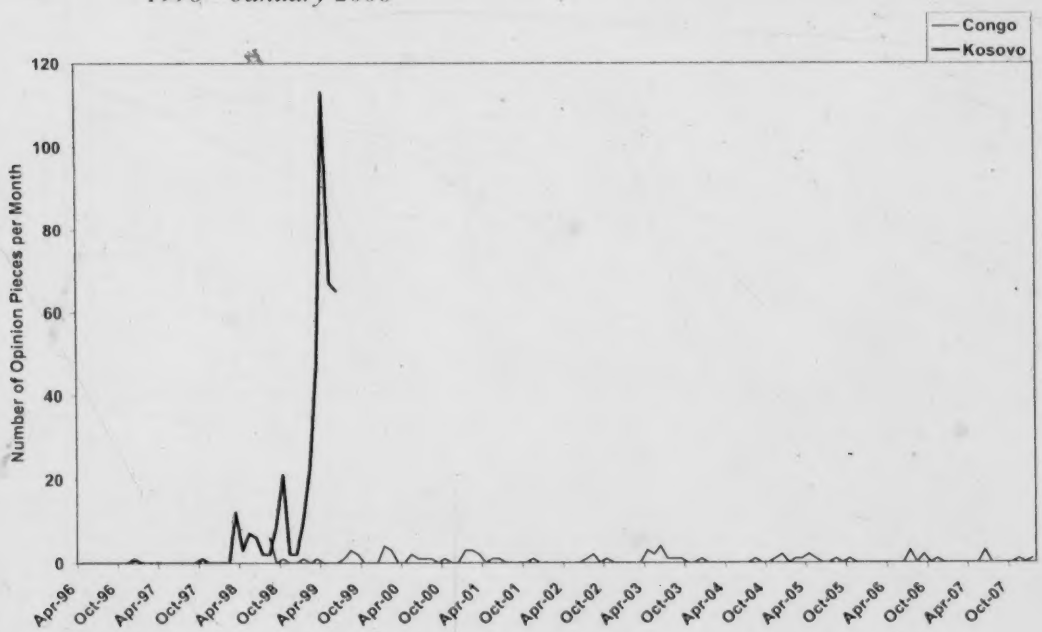
[197] As Figures 2.2 and 2.3 show, there were 12 stories on the Kosovo conflict in April 1998 and 22 in November 1998. Apart from August 1998, the highest number of stories per month on the Congo between August 1998 and January 2008 was in June 2003, which generated 26 stories.

[198] The mean average number of opinion articles on the Congo conflict between August 1998 and January 2008 was 0.684 per month.

**Figure 2.4.** *Number of Columns, Editorials and Op-Eds per Month on the Conflicts in the Congo and Kosovo in the* New York Times *and the* Washington Post, *April 1996 – January 2008*




For the war in Kosovo, we see a sudden rise in the number of opinion pieces in March 1998, 12 compared with zero in the previous four months. It oscillates over the following months, reaching a peak of 113 opinion pieces in April 1999, one of the months of NATO's bombardment of Yugoslavia. While not as pronounced as the difference in hard news coverage of these two conflicts, the number of opinion pieces on the Kosovo conflict exceeded the number on the Congo conflict in ten of the eleven months that the conflicts were occurring at the same time.[199] There were a total of 394 opinion pieces on the conflict in Kosovo in the 39 months between April 1996 and June 1999, while there were 78 on the conflict in the Congo in the 114 months between August 1998 and January 2008. Therefore, there were nearly five times as many opinion pieces on the

[199] There were six opinion pieces on the Congo war in August 1998 compared with two for the conflict in Kosovo.

conflict in Kosovo than on the DRC war in approximately a third of the time. This resulted in an average of 10 opinion pieces on the Kosovo war per month, [200] compared with fewer than one on the conflict in the Congo, supporting this chapter's second hypothesis (H2).

**Figure 2.5.** *Number of Columns, Editorials and Opinion Pieces per Month on the Conflicts in the Congo and Kosovo in the* New York Times *and the* Washington Post, *April 1996 – February 1999*

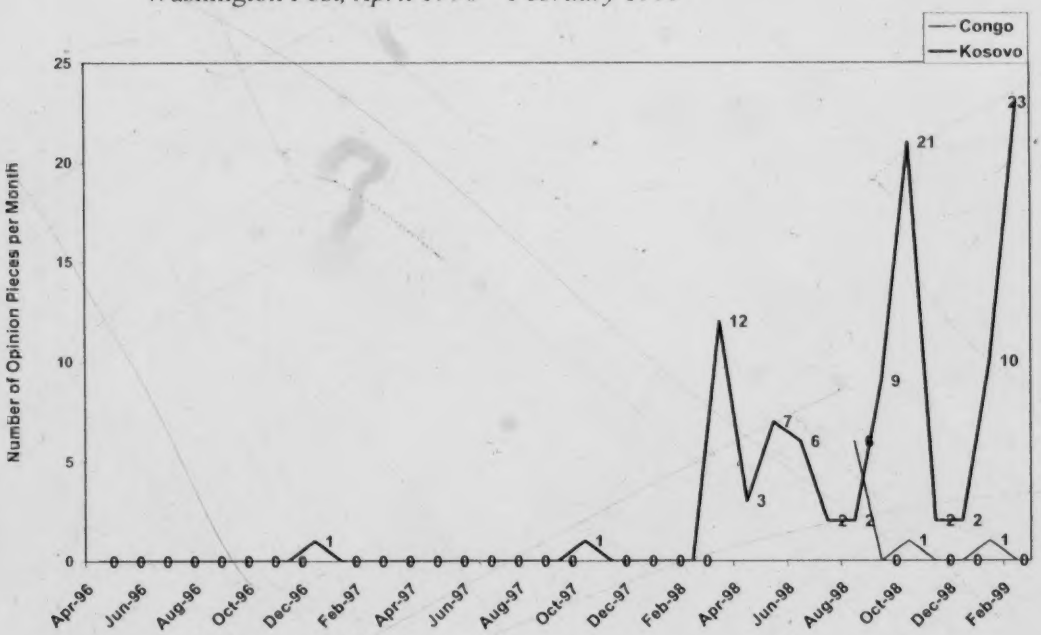



Figure 2.5 compares opinion pieces on these two conflicts prior to March 1999, the month in which NATO began bombing Yugoslavia, which, as argued above regarding the amount of hard news, may similarly have increased the amount of opinion pieces. As it shows, the number of opinion pieces on the Kosovo conflict is as high or greater than the highest amount for the Congo conflict, in seven of the 35 months prior to those in which

[200] Between April 1996 and June 1999 there was an average of 10.102 opinion pieces per month on the conflict in Kosovo.

NATO was at war with Yugoslavia. While the amount for the Congo declines over time as the war progresses, the amount for Kosovo, while oscillating, increases.

Having determined that news coverage of the war in Kosovo was higher than that for the Congo, how does coverage of the DRC conflict compare with coverage of another conflict in the same time period *and* in the same geographical region?

**Figure 2.6.** *Number of Articles per Month on the Conflicts in the Congo and Darfur in the* New York Times *and the* Washington Post, *August 1998 – January 2008*

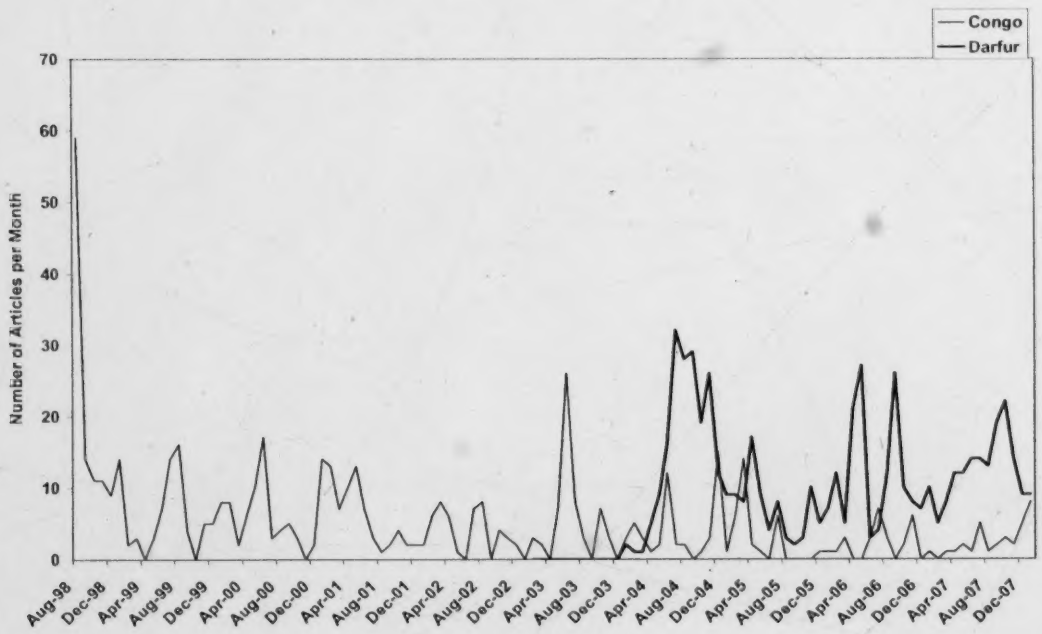



Figure 2.6 juxtaposes the amount of stories per month on the conflict in the Congo with that for the war in the Darfur region of Sudan. As it shows, in contrast to the coverage of the DRC conflict, coverage of Darfur was far from immediate. Although the conflict began in February 2003, the first news story on the conflict appeared in January 2004 in the *Times*, and in April 2004 in the *Post*. However, by June 2004, the number of

articles per month in both newspapers climbs to sixteen, and then doubles to 32 the following month, the highest number of stories per month on the Darfur conflict of all the months studied. Much like coverage of the Congo, the number of articles per month on Darfur fluctuates considerably over the five years studied.

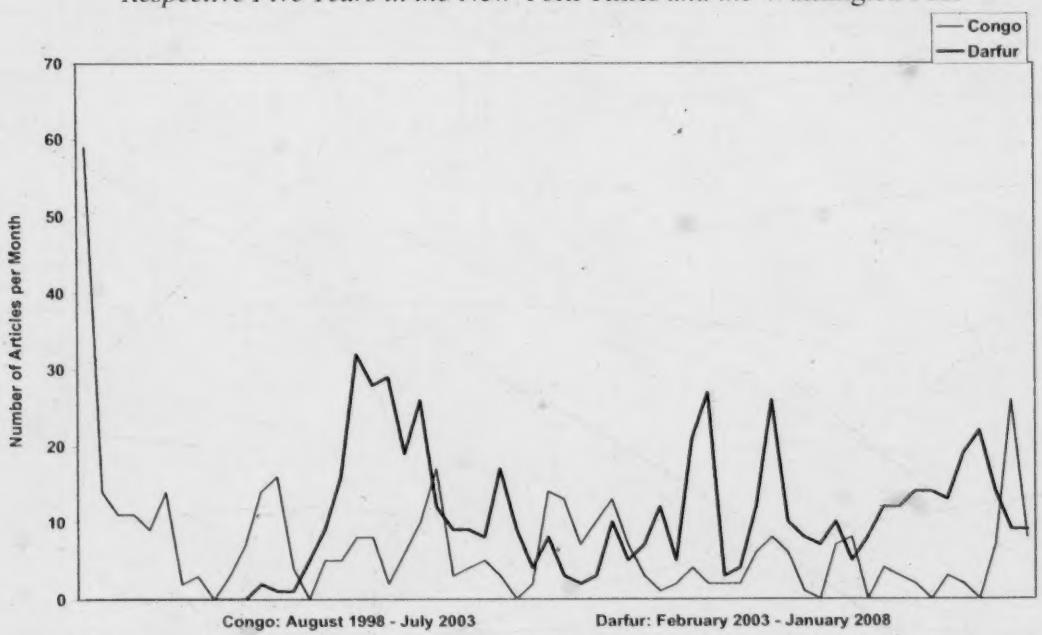
Nevertheless, there were more stories per month on the war in Darfur than on the conflict in the Congo in 43 of the 60 months in which these two conflicts were occurring simultaneously. In total, there were 570 stories on the Darfur conflict in both the *Times* and the *Post*, compared with 567 stories on the conflict in the Congo in approximately twice the time. Overall, there was an average of 9.5 stories per month on the war in Darfur over the 60 months studied, in contrast to 5 on the war in the DRC, supporting this chapter's third hypothesis (H3). The median for the Darfur conflict was 8.5 stories per month, while the mode was zero; for the conflict in the Congo, there was a median of three, and, like Darfur, a mode of zero.

In fact, when directly comparing the amount of coverage per month in these two conflicts' first five years (Figure 2.7), it remains evident that the conflict in Darfur produced more stories per month than did the Congo conflict during their first respective five years. Out of these two conflicts' first 60 months, there were 37 in which there were more stories per month on the conflict in Darfur than in the corresponding months for the conflict in the DRC. The conflict in Darfur received a total of 570 stories during the conflict's first 60 months, compared with 416 for the Congo's first five years. In terms of averages, the conflict in the Congo received a mean of nearly seven stories per month[201]

[201] The mean average number of stories on the Congo conflict between August 1998 and July 2003 was 6.933 per month.

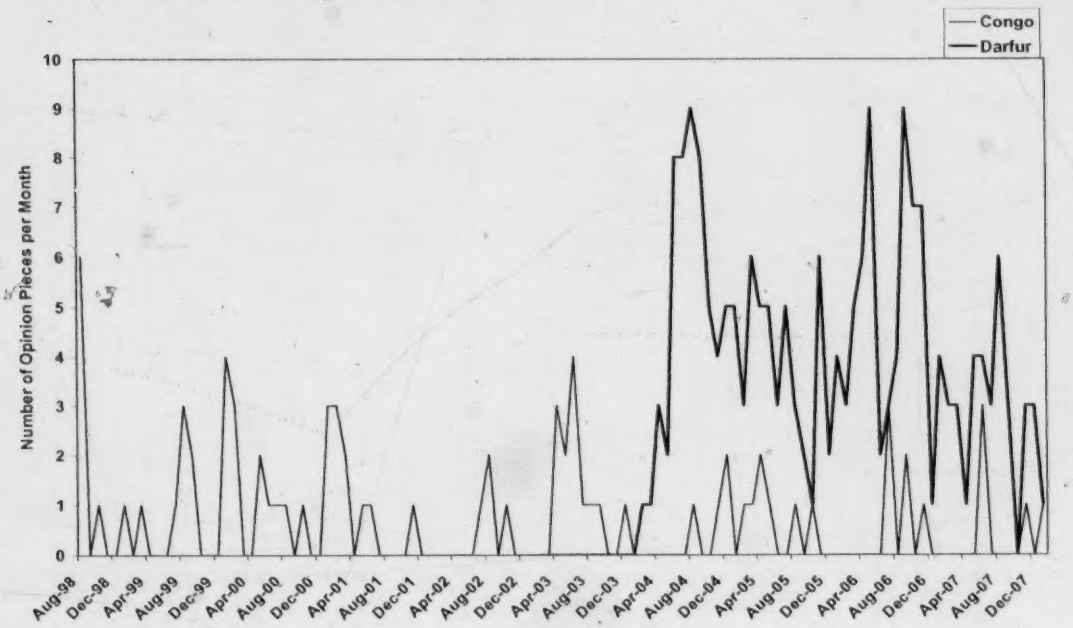
(compared with 9.5 for Darfur), a median of five (8.5 for Darfur), and a mode of two (zero for Darfur).

**Figure 2.7.** *Number of Articles per Month on the Congo and Darfur Conflicts' First Respective Five Years in the* New York Times *and the* Washington Post




How does hard news coverage compare with the amount of opinion pieces on the conflict in Darfur? Figure 2.8 contrasts the number of columns, editorials and op-eds per month on the Congo conflict with the number per month on the conflict in Darfur. For Darfur, much like for its news coverage, there were no opinion pieces on the conflict in its first 12 months. However, while there were fewer than four opinion pieces per month between February 2004 – the first month in which we find an opinion piece on the conflict – and May 2004, the number rises to eight for both June and July 2004, and to nine the following month.

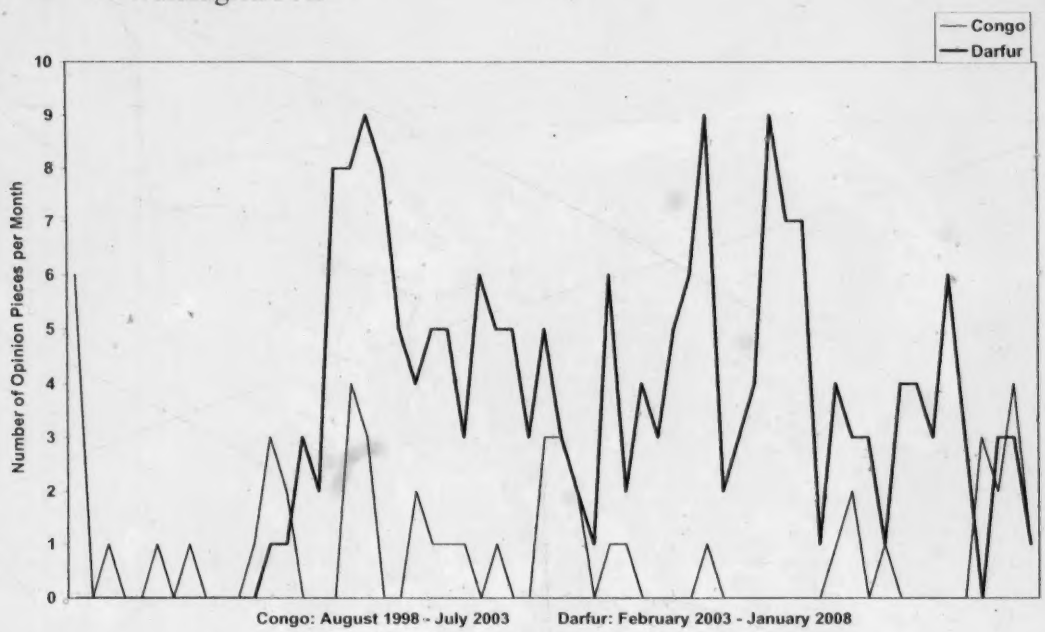
**Figure 2.8.** *Number of Columns, Editorials and Op-Eds per Month on the Conflicts in the Congo and Darfur in the* New York Times *and the* Washington Post, *August 1998 – January 2008*




For 45 of the 60 months in which these two conflicts occurred simultaneously, there were more opinion pieces on the conflict in Darfur than on the DRC conflict. In total, there were 198 opinion pieces on the conflict in Darfur compared with 78 for the Congo in approximately twice the time. For the Congo conflict, we find an average of less than one opinion piece per month, compared with over three opinion pieces per month on the Darfur conflict. Thus, this chapter's fourth hypothesis (H4) has been supported. While the median number of opinion pieces on the conflict in Darfur was three and the mode was zero, both the median and mode for the DRC conflict were zero.[202]

[202] Between August 1998 and January 2008, there was a mean average of 0.684 opinion pieces per month on the Congo conflict. Between February 2003 and January 2008, the mean average for Darfur was 3.3.

**Figure 2.9.** *Number of Columns, Editorials and Op-Eds per Month on the Congo and Darfur Conflicts' First Respective Five Years in the* New York Times *and the* Washington Post




Comparing the number of opinion pieces per month on these two conflicts in their first respective five years (Figure 2.9), we see that the number per month for Darfur frequently surpasses the number per month for the Congo; in fact, out of these two conflicts' first 60 months, there were 41 months in which the Darfur war received more opinion pieces per month than the Congo conflict. There was a total of 53 opinion pieces on the conflict in the DRC in its first five years, producing a mean average of less than one per month (compared with over three for the Darfur conflict), and a median and mode of zero (compared with three and zero, respectively, for Darfur).[203]

[203] The mean average number of opinion pieces on the Congo conflict in its first five years, between August 1998 and July 2003, was 0.883.

## Discussion

The comparatively lower levels of coverage of the Congo conflict compared with the conflicts in Kosovo and Darfur in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* is rather puzzling. Why have these media devoted more coverage to the conflicts in Kosovo and Darfur than they have the conflict in the Congo? The question becomes all the more important when looking at the human cost of the conflicts in terms of lives that each conflict has claimed: both the conflicts in Kosovo and Darfur have resulted in estimated death tolls that are much lower than that for the conflict in the Congo. Would we not expect greater media coverage of an issue that has claimed more lives?

In June 2000, the medical journal *The Lancet* published the results of an epidemiological study on the effects of the conflict in Kosovo on mortality. The study found that from February 1998, when the "[l]ong-standing conflict in Kosovo…escalated," to June 1999, when the conflict ended, there were a total of 12,000 total deaths attributable to the conflict in Kosovo.[204] In May 2000, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) published a study looking at mortality in eastern Congo. The IRC found that in the 22 months between August 1998, when the Congo War began, and May 2000, when they completed their study, there were "1.7 million excess deaths or more…as a result of the fighting in eastern DRC."[205] Let us assume that in the eleven months between August 1998 and June 1999, when the conflict in Kosovo ended, that the total estimated number of deaths in the Congo as a result of the conflict thus far was half

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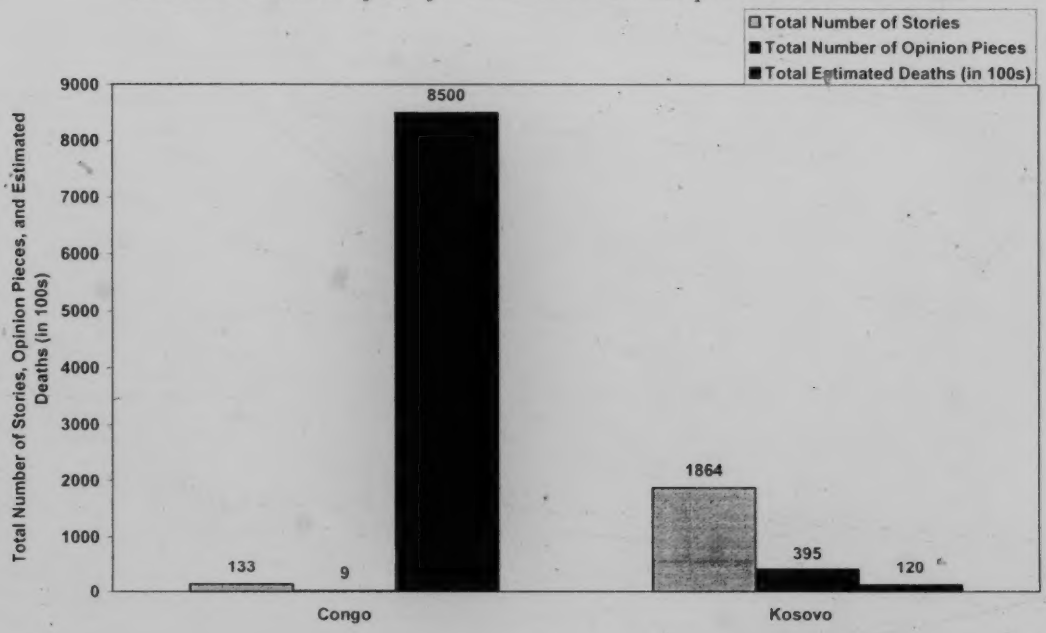
[204] Paul B. Spiegel and Peter Salama. "War and mortality in Kosovo, 1998-99: an epidemiological testimony." The Lancet. Volume 355 Issue 9222. 24 June 2000: 2204-09.

[205] Roberts. "Mortality in Eastern DRC. Results from Five Mortality Surveys by the International Rescue Committee May 2000": 1.

the amount estimated for the 22 months of the IRC study: 850,000 deaths.[206] This would mean that at the time that the Kosovo conflict ended, there were approximately *seventy times* more deaths in the Congo conflict compared with the conflict in Kosovo. This, while in the two media studied the DRC conflict generated 133 stories and nine opinion pieces between August 1998 and June 1999, compared with 1,864 and 395, respectively, for the Kosovo conflict between April 1996 and June 1999. That is, there were roughly *fourteen times* more news articles and nearly *forty-four times* more opinion pieces on the Kosovo conflict than for the conflict in the Congo. Figure 2.10 demonstrates this disparity.

**Figure 2.10.** *Total Number of Articles and Opinion Pieces on the Conflicts in the Congo and Kosovo in the* New York Times *and the* Washington Post*, and the Total Estimated Number of Conflict-Related Deaths, April 1996 – June 1999*




[206] While the IRC's study makes clear that "[t]he overall mortality rate during the year 2000 is higher than it was in 1999," they also emphasize that "this projection of 1.7 million deaths due to this war in eastern DRC is a very conservative estimate." Ibid.: 1, 13.

However, it may be argued that during this time the severity of the Congo War may not have been well known; as mentioned, the first mortality survey was not published until May 2000. Nevertheless, it would have already been known that Rwanda and Uganda had invaded the Congo, and that Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe had troops on Congolese soil assisting the Congolese government against the aggressors.[207] That is, before NATO intervened in Kosovo, it was clear that the conflict was more than simply a rebellion by Congolese forces, as it was perceived in the early days of the conflict, but rather was an international war. As well, Susan Rice, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, had, by the time the Kosovo conflict ended, warned that the conflict in the Congo could become "Africa's first world war," and had flown to the Congo and six other African countries to urge for a political solution to the conflict.[208]

Perhaps more appropriate would be to look at the total amount of coverage that the *Times* and the *Post* accorded to each of the conflicts during their respective durations, along with the total number of deaths. Figure 2.11 shows this comparison.[209]

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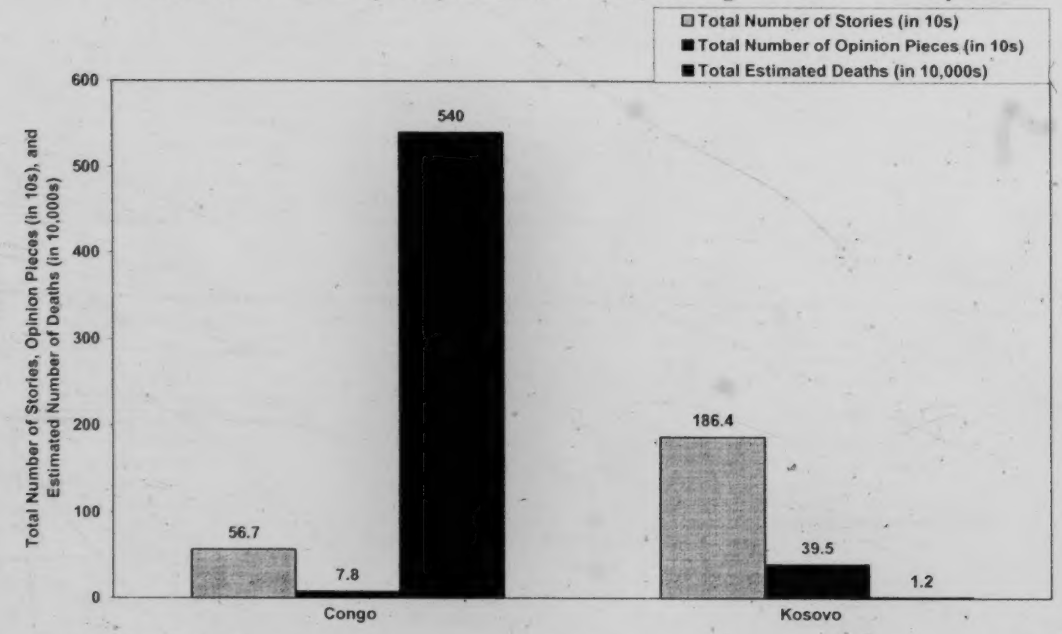
[207] Lynn Duke. "Rwanda Admits Its Troops Aid Congo Rebels; Military Leader Says 'National Security' Prompted Long-Denied Intervention." Washington Post. 7 November 1998; James Rupert. "Congo's Kabila Steps Up Offensive; Move Seen Likely To Prolong Chaos." Washington Post. 17 September 1998; Donald G. McNeil, Jr. "At Third-World Meeting, Hopes for Congo Peace Rise and Fall." New York Times 3 September 1998.

[208] Ian Fisher. "Disunited Rebels Share One Goal: Ousting Kabila." New York Times. 2 November 1998; Fisher. "U.S. Diplomat Pleads for Political Solution to Civil War in Congo." New York Times. 6 November 1998.

[209] For both Figures 2.10 and 2.11, it should be added that the majority of war-related deaths in the Congo are as a result of disease and malnutrition rather than violence, in contrast to the causes of war-related deaths in Kosovo. Roberts. "Mortality in Eastern DRC. Results from Five Mortality Surveys by the International Rescue Committee May 2000"; Benjamin Coghlan et al. "Mortality in the Democratic Republic of Congo: An Ongoing Crisis." International Rescue Committee. 2008. Available from <http://www.theirc.org/resources/2007/2006-7_congomortalitysurvey.pdf>; Spiegel and Salama. "War and mortality in Kosovo, 1998-99: an epidemiological testimony": 2204-09.

**Figure 2.11.** *Total Number of Articles and Opinion Pieces on the Conflicts in the Congo and Kosovo in the* New York Times *and the* Washington Post, *and the Total Estimated Number of Conflict-Related Deaths, August 1998 – January 2008*




As mentioned, there were a total of 1,864 news stories and 395 opinion pieces on the conflict in Kosovo in the 39 months between April 1996 and June 1999. During this time, the conflict led to the deaths of an estimated 12,000 people.[210] In the 114 months between August 1998 and January 2008, in contrast, these two newspapers produced 567 articles and 78 opinion pieces on the Congo conflict. In a mortality study released in January 2008, the IRC found that 5.4 million people had died in the Congo between August 1998 and April 2007 as a result of the conflict.[211] Therefore, while the conflict in the Congo has claimed an estimated *450 times* more lives than the conflict in Kosovo, the Congo conflict generated approximately one-third the number of stories and one-fifth the

[210] Spiegel and Salama. "War and mortality in Kosovo, 1998-99: an epidemiological testimony": 2204-09.
[211] Coghlan et al. "Mortality in the Democratic Republic of Congo: An Ongoing Crisis."

number of opinion pieces that the Kosovo conflict produced in the *Times* and the *Post* – even though the conflict in the Congo has so far gone on for roughly three times as long.

When comparing the total number of stories on the Congo conflict and its estimated death toll with that for Darfur, the second conflict whose coverage in the *Times* and the *Post* this chapter's research examined, do we find a similar disparity?

**Figure 2.12.** *Total Number of Articles and Opinion Pieces on the Conflicts in the Congo and Darfur in the* New York Times *and the* Washington Post*, and the Total Estimated Number of Conflict-Related Deaths, August 1998 – January 2008*

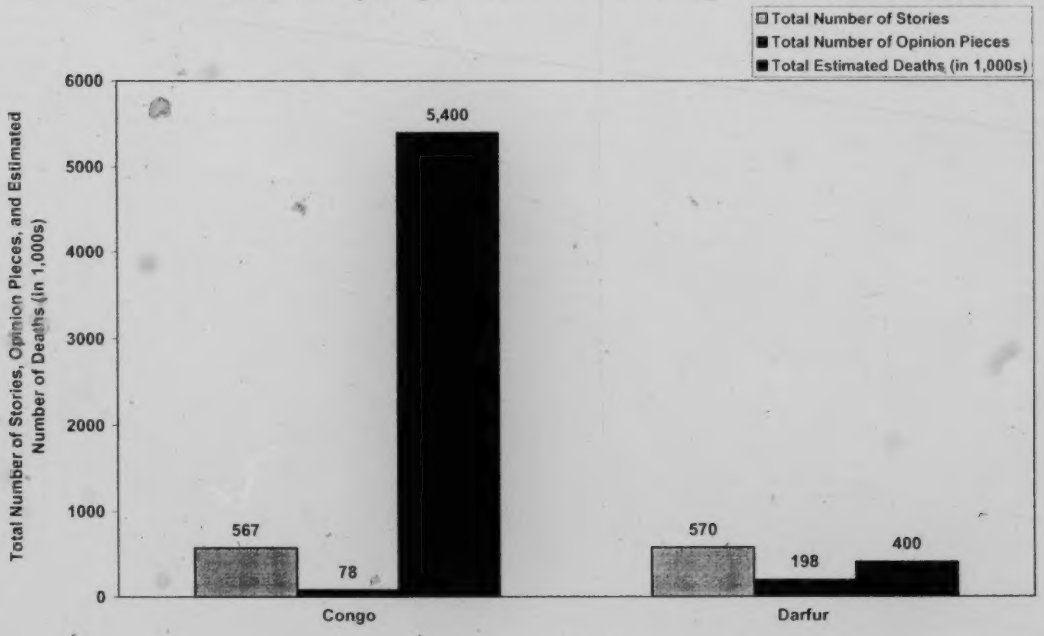



Figure 2.12 displays the total amount of stories in the *Times* and the *Post* accorded to the conflicts in the Congo and Darfur between August 1998 and January 2008, and these conflicts' total estimated number of deaths. As it demonstrates, while the conflict in Darfur received a slightly higher total number of stories in five years than did the DRC's conflict in 9.5 years, the total highest estimated number of deaths from the Darfur conflict

(400,000[212]) dwarfs the estimated amount from the conflict in the Congo (5,400,000). That is, while the Darfur conflict has generated nearly the same number of stories and 2.5 times the number of opinion pieces as the conflict in the Congo, the DRC conflict has resulted in approximately *13.5 times* more deaths.

As Hawkins argues, "[i]n balanced media coverage – 'balanced' here referring to the quantity of coverage, rather than the content – one might expect to see priority of coverage given to conflicts in the world that were the largest in scale, or had caused the greatest loss of life or humanitarian suffering."[213] Indeed, if this is the case, why has this study's research found a seeming inversion of this expectation? What can help explain the relatively lower levels of coverage accorded to the conflict in the Congo in the *Times* and the *Post*, compared with their coverage of the conflicts in Kosovo and Darfur? The following sections will explore some of the more salient potential explanations.

### *Geography*

An important reason for the Kosovo conflict's high levels of coverage is Kosovo's geographic location: Europe. "Because Kosovo is in Europe," Howard Clark, a founder of the Balkan Peace Team project, noted, "it enjoyed a higher international profile than a number of conflicts involving much larger populations and far more bloodshed."[214] Indeed, as Hawkins found in his study noted above, in 2000 the *Times* covered Europe

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[212] "Annan welcomes extension of African Union mission in Darfur." UN News Centre. 21 September 2006. Available from <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=19948&Cr=sudan&Cr1>. The death toll for the conflict in Darfur, however, has been in dispute.
[213] Hawkins. "The Other Side of the CNN Factor: the media and conflict": 229.
[214] Clark. Civil Resistance in Kosovo: 158.

more than it did any other region.[215] The Congo, in contrast, is in a part of the world that tends to receive less media attention: Sub-Saharan Africa.

### *Nature of the Conflicts*

The nature of the three wars may also yield some insight regarding the level of media coverage that they have received. For Kosovo, the Serbian targeting of Albanians was frequently described as genocide, involving ethnic cleansing. Similarly, the conflict in Darfur, has also been characterized as a genocide; the *Times* and the *Post* first reported and ran opinion pieces on Darfur in early 2004, ten years after the Rwandan Genocide, which is likely to have influenced the sudden rise in coverage.[216] Violence in the Congo, however, has not been described as a genocide, which may help explain why it has received lower levels of coverage in the newspapers studied compared with the conflicts in Kosovo and Darfur.

*New York Times* columnist Nicholas D. Kristof, who has written numerous opinion pieces in the *Times* on the horrors in Darfur, explicitly argues that this defining feature of the war in Darfur makes it more important than the conflict in the Congo. In September 2006, Kristof wrote that he was asked why he "always harp[s] on Darfur." "It's a fair question," Kristof wrote, since "[t]he number of people killed in Darfur so far is modest in global terms: estimates range from 200,000 to more than 500,000." "In contrast," he continued, "four million people have died since 1998 as a result of the fighting in the

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[215] Hawkins. "The Other Side of the CNN Factor: the media and conflict": 239. Hawkins geographically categorized the five selected media's news coverage into the following five regions: Africa, Americas, Asia, Europe and the Middle East. Hawkins found that in 2000, Europe received 29.6% of the *Times*'s "total average coverage (2000)."

[216] For more on the influence of the tenth anniversary of the Rwandan Genocide on opinion pieces on Darfur in the U.S. press, see Deborah Murphy. "Narrating Darfur: Darfur in the U.S. Press, March–September 2004." War in Darfur and the Search for Peace. Ed. Alex de Waal. Harvard University Press, 2007: 314-336.

Congo." Kristof explains that the reason why the deaths in Darfur are more significant than those in the Congo or annually from malaria, is because "[w]e have a moral compass within us, and its needle is moved not only by human suffering but also by human evil. That's what makes genocide special -- not just the number of deaths but the government policy behind them." In discussing Anne Frank and the Holocaust, Kristof writes that "[t]eenage girls still die all the time, and little boys still starve and lose their parents -- but when this arises from genocide, the horror resonates with all humans."[217] This perspective may have been influencing the *Times* and the *Post*. Since the conflicts in Kosovo and Darfur were and are perceived to be genocide, these media may be convinced that readers might be drawn to reading their articles – especially, for the case of Darfur, on a genocide in the twenty-first century.

### *Activism*

Another important factor which may help explain the comparative levels of coverage of the three conflicts is the amount of activism surrounding these wars. While the conflict in Kosovo did not appear to produce significant levels of activism to influence media coverage, the conflict in Darfur has produced numerous organizations and activists that have been pressing the issue.[218] The *Chicago Tribune*'s Paul Salopek asserts that the Darfur campaign has "spawned saturation media coverage." One of the most prominent of these organizations is the Save Darfur Coalition, "a media-wise alliance of some 180

[217] Nicholas D. Kristof. "Why Genocide Matters." New York Times. 10 September 2006.
[218] Neela Banerjee. "Muslims' Plight in Sudan Resonates With Jews in U.S." New York Times. 30 April 2006; Valerie Strauss. "Violence in Darfur Inspires Surge in Student Activism." Washington Post. 23 November 2004; Stephanie Strom and Lydia Polgreen. "Advocacy Group's Publicity Campaign on Darfur Angers Relief Organizations." New York Times. 2 June 2007.

religious groups."[219] As the *Post* writes, in 2006 "the coalition organized 'Save Darfur: Rally to End Genocide'" in Washington, D.C., which "was accompanied by more than 20 events around the country that together received extensive TV coverage, with more than 800 stories broadcast in the United States and Canada, according to the coalition." Additionally, Andrew S. Natsios, President Bush's special envoy for Sudan, has said that "[t]he Save Darfur Coalition has kept this issue in the news media and before the public and has focused the issue in a way that hasn't happened in foreign relations maybe since the South Africa anti-apartheid movement."[220] In contrast, the conflict in the Congo has not produced such a broad-based movement of organizations and activists pressing the media to cover the conflict.

### *Government Influence*

Prior to NATO's involvement in the Kosovo conflict, the *Times* and the *Post* may have been influenced by the discussions on and decision by U.S. government leaders to militarily intervene in Yugoslavia. That is, if these newspapers anticipated that their government may militarily participate in the conflict in the near future, they may have reacted by according the conflict greater coverage, in order to provide their readers with adequate contexts and information to understand why the U.S. would be doing so. Correspondingly, regarding the high amount of coverage in March-June 1999, the fact that the United States government was actively participating in NATO's military intervention in Yugoslavia undoubtedly had a tremendous influence on the two media's levels of coverage: One would expect the news media of a country that is involved in a

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[219] Salopek. "Congo: The invisible war: In need for compassion, Africa's deadliest conflict overshadowed by Darfur."

[220] Jeffrey H. Birnbaum. "Saving Darfur, Multiple Steps at a Time; Coalition's Lobbying Blitz Is Credited With Spurring Bush's Sudan Sanctions." Washington Post. 1 June 2007.

military effort to provide a considerable amount of coverage of such a conflict. For the Congo, neither the Clinton nor Bush administrations gave any indication that they were considering military action to end the conflict.

Important organizational factors may also have played an important part, specifically, the media's reliance on the government for some of its news. Because of their "daily news demands and imperative news schedules," Herman and Chomsky explain, the media "need a steady, reliable flow of the raw material of news," and thus "cannot afford to have reporters and cameras at all places where important stories may break."[221] As such, "[e]conomics dictates that they concentrate their resources where significant news often occurs, where important rumors and leaks abound, and where regular press conferences are held. The White House, the Pentagon, and the State Department…are central nodes of such news activity."[222] This can lead to the media focusing more on issues that these sources emphasize. Herman and Chomsky elaborate that since "[t]he mass media are drawn into a symbiotic relationship with powerful sources of information by economic necessity and reciprocity of interest," such "powerful sources regularly take advantage of media routines and dependency to 'manage' the media, to manipulate them into following a special agenda and framework….Part of this management process consists of inundating the media with stories, which serve sometimes to foist a particular line and frame on the media."[223] Therefore, if these governmental 'central nodes of news activity' were emphasizing or merely discussing the conflicts in Kosovo and Darfur, the

[221] Herman and Chomsky. Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media: 18.
[222] Ibid.: 18-19.
[223] Ibid.: 18, 23.

*Times* and the *Post* may have reacted by according them coverage, and in the case of Kosovo, significant coverage.[224]

However, the inverse can occur as well. Cognizant of the media's imperatives, these and other powerful sources, Herman and Chomsky argue, can also help to "chase unwanted stories off the front page or out of the media altogether."[225] Alison Holder's research on the contrasting amounts of coverage that the American news media gave to the 1996-97 conflict in Zaire/Congo ('Phase 1') compared with the amount given to the conflict in the Congo that began in 1998 ('Phase 2') supports this contention. Holder argued that during Phase 2, American "media coverage was 'indexed' to government policy"; press briefings and official statements by the U.S. State Department and White House played a crucial role, by not only discussing the Congo less frequently during Phase 2 compared with Phase 1, but by also "sending 'cues'" to the media "during press briefings that a topic is not high on the government agenda."[226] Indeed, as mentioned in Chapter 1, HRW noted in their 1999 World Report that

> At the outbreak of the current Congo crisis, the [Clinton] administration initially adopted a remarkable silence on the two countries' military involvement.... It was not until August 19 [1998] that a State Department spokesman acknowledged Rwandan and Ugandan military intervention, and even then it was couched in terms apparently intended to justify their actions.[227]

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[224] Both newspapers were interested in providing high levels of coverage of the conflict in Kosovo, even devoting entire sections to the strife, which provided a number of stories on the subject exploring different aspects of the issue. In some days in February 1999 (prior to NATO's involvement), the *Times* included a section titled "Deadline in the Balkans"; in March, shortly before NATO's aerial campaign on the 24th, a section called "Conflict in the Balkans" appeared, which by March 30th was abandoned for "Crisis in the Balkans." From mid- to late-June 1999, the *Post* featured a section titled "Crisis in Kosovo."

[225] Herman and Chomsky. Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media: 23.

[226] Holder. "Forgotten or Ignored? News Media Silence and the Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo": 13, 52, 41-44.

[227] Human Rights Watch. Human Rights Watch World Report 1999: Events of December 1997-November 1998. New York: Human Rights Watch, December 1998: 39.

Given the economic and daily news demands of the *Times* and *Post* and other media, they may have been excessively influenced by these and other types of official pronouncements.

Herman and Chomsky additionally argue that as institutions that are substantially influenced by state and corporate power, the news media in the U.S. are "effective and powerful ideological institutions that carry out a system-supportive propaganda function by reliance on market forces, internalized assumptions, and self-censorship," which "serve to mobilize support for the special interests that dominate the state and private activity."[228] The lower levels of coverage of the conflict in the DRC compared with the amount of coverage of the conflicts in Kosovo and Darfur found in this chapter's research can be seen to support the view that the media largely serve elite interests, particularly those of the state.

In addition to organizational factors, the comparatively high level of coverage before NATO's involvement in the Kosovo conflict might also be explained using Herman and Chomsky's insights into the quantity and quality of media coverage of the Khmer Rouge atrocities in Cambodia in the late 1970s. As discussed above, coverage of the "Communist monsters" in Cambodia had an important "utilitarian function": mainly, they would "be useful for subsequent U.S. participation in terror and violence, as in its crusades in Central America shortly after."[229] In the Cold War generally, a "constant focus on victims of communism helps convince the public of enemy evil and sets the stage for intervention…and military conflict."[230] Similarly, the level of coverage of the atrocities in Kosovo may have been done to assist the Clinton administration in justifying

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[228] Herman and Chomsky. Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media: 306, xi.
[229] Ibid: 302; Chomsky. The New Military Humanism: Lessons from Kosovo: 47-48.
[230] Herman and Chomsky. Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media: xv.

future military action in the region; that is, media coverage of the strife may have been intended to influence the public to not only tolerate but also champion the use of violence to end fighting in Kosovo. The "intensive coverage" of the mass murder of dozens of Albanians at the Kosovar village of Racak on January 15th, 1999, specifically, was seen as particularly useful by U.S. officials, who, Herman and Chomsky write, "were trying to ready the U.S. and Western publics for an imminent NATO attack on Yugoslavia." Since the U.S. mainstream media accorded "heavy" attention to Racak which "helped create the moral basis" for NATO's war, the Racak killings, "with the cooperation of the media…were effectively used" to prepare the American public for the ensuing military intervention.[231] As with the level of pre-NATO coverage, the high amount of coverage of the conflict in Kosovo while NATO was militarily involved in Yugoslavia may have also been produced to support the U.S. government's military participation in Kosovo. As James Winter, professor of Communications Studies at the University of Windsor, has argued, "…the U.S. Administration and its collaborators in other governments and the media conducted…[a] massive and successful propaganda campaign to justify their international terror" in Kosovo.[232]

For Darfur, greater coverage of the conflict can also be seen to assist U.S. foreign policy goals. In discussing why "the West was consumed with horror over Khmer Rouge atrocities" in Cambodia in the late 1970s, Herman and Chomsky argue that "the Khmer Rouge had a useful role to play," including providing "a retrospective justification for earlier French and American crimes in Indochina."[233] The perpetrators of the conflict in

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[231] Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky. Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media. 2nd ed. New York: Pantheon Books, 2002: xxiii-xxiv.
[232] James Winter. Media Think. Montréal: Black Rose Books, 2002: 100.
[233] Herman and Chomsky. Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media: 296.

Darfur are Arab Muslims, which, in the post-September 11th American media climate, are not difficult to demonize.[234] Much more importantly, however, coverage of the atrocities committed by Arab Muslims in Darfur may similarly be helpful in providing 'retrospective justification' for the U.S. government's use of force against other Arab Muslims, perhaps notably the invasion of Iraq.

In contrast to the massacres in Kosovo and Darfur, atrocities in the Congo do not have any "utilitarian function"; they can not be used for "retrospective justification" for recent uses of violence by the U.S. government, nor, it seems, can they "be useful for subsequent U.S. participation in terror and violence."[235] Perhaps much more importantly, substantial coverage of the conflict would be detrimental to elite state interests, considering the principal perpetrators of the conflict in the Congo: Rwanda and Uganda. HRW have noted that these two countries, at least during the Clinton administration, were the U.S.'s "staunchest allies in the region."[236] Coupled with diplomatic support, the U.S. has also provided Rwanda and Uganda with considerable military assistance prior to their invasion of the Congo in 1998.[237] As Herman and Chomsky argue regarding the American mass media's lack of coverage of Indonesia's atrocities in East Timor in the 1970s:

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[234] Niral Shah. "Five Minutes with Noam Chomsky." Wiretap Magazine. 8 February 2007. Available from <http://www.wiretapmag.org/warandpeace/42978/>. When asked in an interview "Why have college students organized a very large and effective movement against the genocide in Darfur, but not against the war in Iraq?" Chomsky responded that "You can say the same about columnists in the press, or commentators and editorial writers. They're very upset about the atrocities in Darfur, but not the atrocities that we carry out. There's a very simple reason. It's extremely easy to condemn the crimes of others...." "Furthermore, in the case of Darfur, the crimes happened to be carried out by an official enemy, Arabs. There's nothing easier than condemning the crimes of an official enemy." It should be noted that he did not indicate that it is the fact that Arab *Muslims* are carrying out the atrocities that is influencing columnists, editorial writers or college protests.

[235] Herman and Chomsky. Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media:. 296, 302.

[236] Human Rights Watch. Human Rights Watch World Report 1999: Events of December 1997-November 1998: 39.

[237] For more on the U.S.'s diplomatic and military relations with Rwanda and Uganda prior to their invasion, please see the section in Chapter 1 titled "The Role of the U.S."

> [A]ttention to the Indonesian invasion would have embarrassed a loyal ally and quickly disclosed the crucial role of the United States in providing military aid and diplomatic support for aggression and slaughter. Plainly, news about East Timor would not have been useful, and would, in fact, have discomfited important domestic power groups.[238]

Similarly, high-levels of coverage of the conflict in the Congo would be detrimental to the American government's interests, since it would have embarrassed the U.S.'s allies in the region, which in turn would have embarrassed the U.S. for being partially responsible for mass murder.[239] One can find analogous explanations for the American news media's minimal levels of coverage of Turkey's massacres of the Kurds in the 1990s, carried out with extensive U.S. diplomatic and military support.[240]

### *Advertisers*

The *Times* and the *Post*, like countless other media, are profit-seeking corporations primarily interested in maximizing revenue for their shareholders. Profits are largely generated not by selling newspapers to readers, but by selling readers (through advertising space) to advertisers.[241] That is, as Herman and Chomsky explain, "the

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[238] Herman and Chomsky. Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media: 302.

[239] In making a similar argument, Holder, however, focuses on U.S.-Rwandan relations. Holder. "Forgotten or Ignored? News Media Silence and the Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo": 41.

[240] "It goes without saying," Herman argues, "that the mainstream U.S. media have given the Turkish ethnic cleansing [of Kurds] minimal attention and indignation." Edward S. Herman. "Bombing a la Mode: The U.S. right to police, rule and exterminate." Z Magazine. December 1998: 42-43. Interestingly, Chomsky writes that "In the case of Turkey, 'conscience-shocking situations' went virtually unheeded in the United States until the moment in early 2003 when the Turkish government defied Washington's demands...by refusing to allow an attack on Iraq from its borders. At that point, one began to read about 'Turkey's ghastly record of torturing, killing, and 'disappearing' Turkish Kurds and destroying more than 3,000 of their villages,' with citations from human rights organizations reiterating what they had reported in far more detail years before while the crimes were in progress, thanks to US aid." It should be added that in 1997 "the flow of US arms to Turkey exceeded the combined total of US military aid to Turkey for the entire Cold War period prior to the onset of its counterinsurgency campaign against its miserably repressed Kurdish population.... As atrocities escalated, Turkey became the leading recipient of US arms worldwide, Israel and Egypt aside, with 80 percent of its supply coming from Washington." Noam Chomsky. Hegemony or Survival: America's Quest for Global Dominance. London: Hamish Hamilton, 2003: 61, 52.

[241] Robert Babe, the Jean Monty/BCE Chair in Media Studies at the University of Western Ontario, notes that "It is well known that some 80 percent of newspaper revenues derive from advertising, as opposed to

private media are major corporations selling a product (readers and audiences) to other businesses (advertisers)."[242] Given the *Times* and the *Post*'s institutional obligation to maximize profits, it is surprising that these media have not accorded the Congo conflict greater coverage, considering its arguable potential to attract readers. After all, the conflict in the Congo has gone on for several years, ended millions of lives, and has seen the direct military involvement of over half a dozen countries.[243] One might therefore expect these two newspapers to run significant number of stories on the conflict. What factors challenge this assumption?

An important consideration is the power of advertisers. Since the *Times* and the *Post* and other newspapers are largely financially supported by advertisers, the latter can be in positions to have substantial influence on these newspapers. Advertisers have occasionally exercised this power by withdrawing or threatening to withdraw their ads in media that have run or were planning on running news or documentaries which advertisers felt would undermine their efforts to encourage readers to purchase their products or services. For example, the *New York Times*, owned by the New York Times Company, published "a series of articles on medical malpractice" in 1976 which "angered the medical industry, including pharmaceutical firms." Journalist and former Dean of the

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20 percent from subscriptions or single copy sales. From a business perspective…the editorial content of a newspaper…is the cost publishers incur to assemble readers for advertisers; newspaper owners sell readership to advertisers, and 'content' is their cost of producing this 'audience commodity.'" Robert Babe. "Newspaper Discourses on Environment." Filtering the News: Essays on Herman and Chomsky's Propaganda Model. Ed. Jeffery Klaehn. Montréal: Black Rose Books, 2005: 189.

[242] Herman and Chomsky. Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media: 303; Indeed, Chomsky has noted that the "larger media outlets" are "mega-corporations, which are highly profitable," and, "like other corporations, [they] have a product to sell and a market they want to sell it to: the product is audiences, and the market is advertisers. So the economic structure of a newspaper is that it sells readers to other businesses….they're not really trying to sell newspapers to people – in fact very often a journal that's in financial trouble will try to cut *down* its circulation, and…try to…up-scale their readership, because that increases advertising rates." Chomsky. Understanding Power: The Indispensable Chomsky: 14. Emphasis in original.

[243] For greater elaboration on these and other aspects of the conflict, please see Chapter 1.

University of California at Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism, Ben Bagdikian, observes that

> They could not retaliate effectively against the *New York Times*, which does not carry much medical advertising. But medicine-related advertisers were crucial to magazines published by the New York Times Company, including a periodical called *Modern Medicine*. Pharmaceutical firms threatened to withdraw 260 pages of their ads from *Modern Medicine*, a loss of half a million dollars, and the Times Company sold its medical magazines to [book publisher] Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.[244]

Bagdikian adds "How many papers, rather than sell profitable subsidiaries like the Time's [*sic*] medical magazines, would instead have decided not to print the malpractice series or have told their editors not to report such stories again?" In 1957, *Reader's Digest* published "a strong article on medical evidence against tobacco. Later that month, the advertising agency the magazine had used for twenty-eight years said it no longer wanted the *Digest* as a client." Similarly, the *Mother Jones* magazine published a series "on the link between tobacco and cancer and heart disease" in 1980, "after which tobacco companies canceled their ads with the magazine."[245] The public-television station WNET "lost its corporate funding from Gulf + Western in 1985 after that station showed the documentary 'Hungry for Profit,'" Herman and Chomsky write, "which contains material critical of multinational corporate activities in the Third World."[246] The *Economist*, Herman and Chomsky add, asserted that "Most people believe that WNET would not make the same mistake again."[247] In 1978, Bagdikian notes, Air Canada "notified newspaper advertising managers that its ads would be canceled as long as any news story

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[244] Bagdikian. The Media Monopoly: 164-65.
[245] Ibid.: 165, 173.
[246] Herman and Chomsky. Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media: 17.
[247] Quoted in ibid.: 17.

of an Air Canada crash or hijacking ran in the paper and if its ads were carried within two pages of a news story of any crash or hijacking on any airline."[248]

It should not be surprising that companies would not want to pay for advertising space in a medium that runs stories that may influence readers not to buy these companies' products or services. Moreover, we might expect some media to understand this dynamic, and therefore be inclined to not frequently publish stories that may offend their financial backers.[249]

"[T]he influence of advertisers and publisher's fears of offending advertisers"[250] may provide some helpful explanation regarding the *Times* and the *Post*'s comparatively lower levels of coverage of the conflict in Congo. As discussed in Chapter 1, numerous multinational corporations have been profiting from the conflict, both directly, by investing in mining in militarily occupied regions, and indirectly, by importing natural resources stolen from the Congo. One such important resource is coltan, a metallic ore used in high-technology. Countless companies use coltan in their products[251] – including consumer goods such as cell-phones, computers, DVD players and video-game systems – though it is often unclear in the supply chain where it ultimately comes from.[252] It stands to reason, therefore, that companies involved in the selling of products that contain coltan that may or not may not come from the Congo and that are advertising in these

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[248] Bagdikian. The Media Monopoly: 169.

[249] Awareness of the importance of advertisers can also affect news quality: as Michael Parenti writes, in 1973 and 1974 *New York Times* publisher Arthur Ochs Sulzberger "urged his editors to present the [automobile] industry position in coverage of safety and auto pollution" since, Sulzberger admits, it "would affect the advertising," no inconsiderable concern, given that, Parenti notes, "[t]he auto industry was a major newspaper advertiser, responsible for about 18 percent of ad revenues" during this time. Michael Parenti. Inventing Reality: The Politics of the Mass Media. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986: 48.

[250] Bagdikian. The Media Monopoly: 169.

[251] Keith Harmon Snow and David Barouski write that "Sony dramatically increased their importation of coltan following the release of their Playstation 2, while Compaq, Microsoft, Dell, Ericsson, Hewlett-Packard, IBM, Nokia, Intel, Lucent and Motorola are also large-scale consumers" of coltan. Snow and Barouski. "Behind the Numbers: Untold Suffering in the Congo."

[252] For more on this, please see Chapter 1.

newspapers, may not be convinced that readers will buy their products if readers are also exposed to the conflict in the Congo in the newspaper. While the stories need not necessarily discuss the relations between coltan and the conflict, these advertisers may fear that substantial coverage might compel readers to learn more about the conflict elsewhere. In doing so, these readers may learn about the international economic realities of the conflict, and might then change their consumption habits, including refusing to buy products containing coltan that may come from the Congo, or altogether boycotting companies that are indirectly profiting from the conflict. In Europe, for example, non-governmental organizations have launched the 'no blood on my cell phone' campaign to lobby for an embargo on 'blood tantalum'[253] (coltan), in addition to the existing ban on 'blood diamonds.' Therefore, while the institutional structure of these newspapers may theoretically compel them to cover such an issue as the Congo conflict, the economic aspects of these institutions might be persuading them otherwise. Contrastingly, it does not appear that advertisers would be concerned with high levels of coverage of the conflicts in Kosovo or Darfur, since there are few large and powerful companies involved in these conflicts that would have enough clout to affect these two newspapers.

## Summary

This chapter's research examined the amount of coverage that the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* have accorded to the war in the Congo. By using Herman and Chomsky's method of studying paired examples, this research compared this level of coverage with the amount that the *Times* and the *Post* accorded to two other conflicts

[253] Helen Vesperini. "Congo's coltan rush." BBC. 1 August 2001. Available from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/1468772.stm>.

occurring at approximately the same time: the wars in Kosovo and Darfur. It was hypothesized that these two conflicts received greater levels of coverage, measured in both news articles and opinion pieces, than the conflict in the Congo. The data supported the hypotheses: The wars in Kosovo and Darfur did in fact receive more coverage than the conflict in the Congo in these two newspapers in most of the months in which the conflicts occurred at the same time, in total, and in the average number of stories per month.

There are many potential explanations for these findings. Some reasons suggested above include Kosovo's geographic location, genocide in Kosovo and Darfur, the U.S.'s discussion and use of military force in Kosovo, and concerted organizations' ability to influence the media to cover the horrors in Darfur. As well, considering their dependence on their government for some of their international news, the *Times* and the *Post* may have been influenced by the U.S. government to produce relatively greater coverage of the wars in Kosovo and Darfur, in contrast to the lower levels of coverage accorded to the war in the Congo. As well, the economic features of both the war in the DRC and these two newspapers – specifically, the role of advertisers – may provide additionally helpful explanations.

## Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

There are certain limitations to this study. Because this study was searching for visibility of the conflicts in these two newspapers, stories and opinion pieces that covered these conflicts that did not contain any of the terms that signal a conflict in the headline or first two paragraphs were not included, which may have increased the amount of data

for all three conflicts. Nevertheless, since they did not include these terms in the headline or first two paragraphs, it is argued that they do not immediately signal to readers that violent conflicts are or were occurring in these countries.

This study's research did not take into account the location of the articles in these newspapers. An article on or near a newspaper's front page is more likely to be read than one buried within or near the back of the newspaper, and may also affect readers' perceptions of the relative importance of these conflicts.

The size of the stories was also not taken into consideration. Smaller articles, such as those found in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*'s 'World Briefing Africa/Europe' and 'World in Brief respective sections, may not be as prominent, and therefore, read as often as lengthier articles. As with a story's locations, shorter stories may also be perceived as less significant an issue. As well, important details and contexts may be absent in smaller articles.

Since this study's research was quantitatively focused, it did not examine the quality of these two newspapers' coverage of these conflicts. The comparative ways in which these conflicts were framed – which influence how readers perceive the issues, including their root causes, the different actors involved, and readers' potential relationship to them – is important for readers' understanding of the conflicts, in addition to their awareness of them.

This study also only focused on two newspapers, and as such did not determine the contrasting level of coverage of these three conflicts in other media, including other newspapers, news magazines, television news, or Internet news websites. Nevertheless,

as two of the US's top newspapers, the *Times* and the *Post* can considerably influence these and other media.

Future studies on these and similar topics would be encouraged to take into consideration some of these issues that were not included in this study. Contrasting the location and size of stories in newspapers may yield interesting comparisons: although two issues may produce comparable numbers of articles over a given time period, comparing these stories' placement might indicate that articles on one issue tend to be on or near newspapers' front pages more frequently than stories on the other, while contrasting the size of these articles could find that one issue tends to produce lengthier stories. Additionally, qualitatively analyzing the stories on the conflicts in the Congo, Kosovo and Darfur, for example, may reveal important differences in the particular ways in which they have been framed, as well as the extent to which essential aspects of these wars have been discussed and in how much detail. While the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* are the US's leading newspapers, examining and comparing their coverage of the Congo War with that of other American media may provide a fuller understanding of the extent to which the US media have reported the conflict. One may also find interesting results by studying and contrasting other countries' media's coverage of the conflict.

# Conclusions

The news media are exceedingly powerful organizations. As institutions possessing the resources to document and publicize events and issues occurring nearly throughout the world, they are able to provide citizens with a tremendous amount of timely information regarding domestic and particularly international news. As a result, the public acquires much of its knowledge and understanding of issues taking place in other countries and regions from the news media, given that most people tend not to have their own sources of information from all parts of the world.

However, it may be problematic if citizens are overly dependent on these organizations for their awareness and appreciation of international events. If the news media accord significant and sustained coverage of an issue, readers may perceive it to be exceptionally important, and it may overshadow other events and issues. Conversely, if an issue is given limited and irregular attention, readers may unwittingly perceive it is less important, or, at worse, they may not learn about it at all.

This research was inspired by the assertion that the war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is a "stealth conflict"[254] and "Africa's forgotten and ignored war."[255] Considering the influence that the news media can have on determining whether or not people are aware of an issue, coupled with one writer's contention that the media in the West "generally do not cover the ongoing war" in the Congo,[256] this study empirically

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[254] Hawkins. "Stealth Conflicts: Africa's World War in the DRC and International Consciousness."
[255] Salopek. "Congo: The invisible war: In need for compassion, Africa's deadliest conflict overshadowed by Darfur."
[256] Stroehlein. "In Congo, 1,000 die per day: Why isn't it a media story?"

examined the extent to which the conflict in the DRC has been covered in two of the U.S.'s leading newspapers, the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. However, one cannot determine the significance of such results without comparing them to the same newspapers' amount of coverage of other conflicts occurring at approximately the same time. As such, through the use of Herman and Chomsky's method of studying paired examples, coverage of the Congo War in these two newspapers was contrasted with their coverage of the wars in Kosovo and Darfur, with the hypotheses that the latter two conflicts had received greater levels of attention, in both news stories and opinion pieces, in the two newspapers.

The research supported these hypotheses. The *Times* and the *Post* accorded greater coverage to the Kosovo and Darfur conflicts than they did to the conflict in the DRC, measured in three ways: in a majority of the months in which the conflicts occurred simultaneously, in total number of stories, and in the average number of stories per month. These findings are significant since they demonstrate that collectively the *Times* and the *Post* have accorded relatively less coverage to a conflict that has thus far killed millions – and indeed, as mentioned, the highest conflict-related death toll since World War II – compared with conflicts that have led to far fewer deaths, an inversion of what may be expected.

A number of potential explanations for this discrepancy have been proposed. For Kosovo, the fact that the war was occurring in Europe, provides important insights into why the conflict has received greater coverage than the Congo War, which is located in Sub-Saharan Africa. Both the conflicts in Kosovo and Darfur were widely perceived as being genocidal in nature; given the powerful nature of this type of conflict, coupled

with, for Darfur, the tenth anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda, the *Times* and the *Post* may have been convinced that a genocide is more important for, and to attract, readers. Principally for the war in Darfur, countless organizations in the U.S. have mobilized to increase public awareness of the conflict, which has influenced the amount of media coverage.

The U.S. government has also had a role to play regarding the comparative levels of media attention to these three conflicts. The daily news imperatives of news media such as the *Times* and the *Post* encourage them to obtain some of their international news from central nodes of news activity, primarily governmental sources and press briefings, which may have subjected them to the government's emphasis of the violence in Kosovo, which these newspapers may have reflected in their high levels of coverage of the issue. A less benign assessment, however, would suggest that the media assisted the government to accord the conflict extensive coverage, so as to encourage the public to support the impending military action in Kosovo. As well, those responsible for the Darfur war, an Arab Islamic regime disliked by the U.S. government, may play a significant role, as coverage of the conflict may provide 'retrospective justification' for the U.S.'s recent military actions against other Arabs and Islamic regimes. For the conflict in the DRC, this thesis has suggested that the *Times* and the *Post* may have been influenced by the U.S. government's lack of stress on the conflict in the Congo. The U.S.'s relations with Rwanda and Uganda may help explain the DRC war's comparatively lower amount of attention in these two newspapers, since high coverage of the conflict would embarrass the government for having strong diplomatic relations with countries responsible for the war, and for having provided these states with weapons and military training.

Finally, the potential role of advertisers was discussed. As corporations dependent on advertising from companies for their revenues, the *Times* and the *Post* may be inclined not to provide substantial coverage of the Congo conflict, given that a number of companies may be indirectly benefiting from the war. That is, these newspapers may be convinced that high levels of coverage of the conflict could affect these companies' willingness to continue to advertise in their pages. Given the minimal corporate interests in the conflicts in Kosovo and Darfur, it does not appear that these newspapers would be concerned about advertiser backlash regarding high levels of coverage of these wars.

One can only speculate on the effects that this has had on readers of the U.S.'s two leading newspapers, and on other media which the *Times* and the *Post* influence. It may be argued that not only could these readers be possibly less informed of the conflict in the Congo, they may also inadvertently perceive it as relatively less important. At worst, many readers may not be aware of the war's existence at all.

More media coverage could have an immeasurably positive impact, specifically by influencing people's actions. By increasing public awareness of the crisis, citizens could help put pressure on the U.S. government to do more to help mitigate the conflict, including influencing its allies in the region to end their alleged support of rebel groups in the DRC, assist the victims of the conflict, and help the country rebuild its shattered infrastructure, economy, and health and education sectors. More informed about the conflict, citizens might also donate more to humanitarian organizations working in eastern Congo, and even put additional pressure on or even boycott corporations using coltan in their products, to ensure their suppliers do not obtain it from the Congo. Indeed,

Mats Pellback-Scharp from the telecommunications giant Ericsson claims that "[i]f there was a huge international boycott, we would support it."[257]

While large-scale violence in the Congo may be decreasing, the conflict persists. Armed groups – particularly Laurent Nkunda's CNDP, the anti-Tutsi FDLR and the Maï-Maï – continue to control large tracts of land in the east, to terrorize citizens, and frequently displace countless people when they clash with each other. Women and girls continue to be victims of sexual violence, and it is estimated that approximately 45,000 citizens continue to die every month primarily in the eastern regions from disease and malnutrition as a result of the conflict. Given the severity of the war, the persistent number of victims that it produces, and the power of the media to inform people of issues and events occurring in nearly all regions of the world, greater media coverage of the conflict and humanitarian crisis is imperative. Without it, the 'invisible war' in the Congo will almost certainly be a part of forgotten history, since it has arguably barely entered the present.

[257] Quoted in Essick. "Guns, Money and Cell Phones."

# Appendix 1

To determine the level of visibility of the Congo conflict in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, the term "Congo" (but not "Congo Republic" or "Republic of Congo," as this is another country) was searched for in a story's headline or first two paragraphs ('Headline or Lead Paragraph' in *Factiva*) using the *Factiva* news data base program, along with any of the following terms in the headline or first two paragraphs:

"aggression," "attack(s)," "atrocities," "atrocity," "battle(s)," "carnage," "cease-fire," "conflict," "embattled," "ethnic cleansing," "fight(ing)," "fighters," "fought," "genocide," "guerilla(s)," "human disaster," "human(itarian) crisis," "invaded," "invasion," "insurgency," "insurgents," "insurrection," "intervention," "military offensive," "militia(s)," "militiamen," "of overthrowing," "peace," "peacemaking," "peacekeeper(s)," "peacekeeping," "rebel(s)," "rebellion," "renegade," "revolt," "strife," "to overthrow," "truce," "war," "warfare," "warring," "war-ravaged," "war-torn," "withdraw(al)/(ing)."

This included news summaries (*New York Times*: World in Brief: Africa/Europe; *Washington Post*: World in Brief), but excluded 'corrections,' 'news summary' and 'inside.'

The same formula was repeated for Darfur: "Darfur" along with the above terms in a story's headline or first two paragraphs

For stories on the conflict in Kosovo, "Kosovo" and the following terms were searched for in a story's headline or first two paragraphs, in addition to the above terms.

"aggression(s)," "air campaign," "(air) strikes," "attacked," "attacking," "battlefield(s)," "bloodshed," "bombarded," "bombardment," "bomb(ed)/(s)," "bombing" "conflict(s)," "counterinsurgency," "crimes against humanity," "genocidal," "gruesome," "horror," "human catastrophe," "humanitarian operation(s)," "human tragedy," "kill," "killed," "killing(s)," "military action," "massacre(d)/(s)," "mass execution(s)," "mass killing(s)," "military emergencies," "military mission," "military operation," "nonviolence," "peaceful," "repression," "slaughter," "terror," "use (of(military)) force," "violence," "violent," "warplane(s)."

# Appendix 2

This appendix contains the data for the research found in Chapter 2; that is, Figures 2.1 – 2.12.

## Data for the number of stories per month on the Congo conflict (Figure 2.1).

**Table S2.1**: Number of stories per month on the conflict in the Congo in the *New York Times*, August 1998 – January 2008.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Aug-98 | 33 | Jan-01 | 6 | Jun-03 | 19 | Nov-05 | 0 |
| Sep-98 | 10 | Feb-01 | 10 | Jul-03 | 6 | Dec-05 | 1 |
| Oct-98 | 4 | Mar-01 | 3 | Aug-03 | 1 | Jan-06 | 1 |
| Nov-98 | 8 | Apr-01 | 7 | Sep-03 | 0 | Feb-06 | 1 |
| Dec-98 | 7 | May-01 | 11 | Oct-03 | 5 | Mar-06 | 3 |
| Jan-99 | 9 | Jun-01 | 6 | Nov-03 | 1 | Apr-06 | 0 |
| Feb-99 | 1 | Jul-01 | 3 | Dec-03 | 0 | May-06 | 0 |
| Mar-99 | 0 | Aug-01 | 0 | Jan-04 | 3 | Jun-06 | 2 |
| Apr-99 | 0 | Sep-01 | 1 | Feb-04 | 5 | Jul-06 | 3 |
| May-99 | 2 | Oct-01 | 3 | Mar-04 | 3 | Aug-06 | 3 |
| Jun-99 | 5 | Nov-01 | 0 | Apr-04 | 1 | Sep-06 | 0 |
| Jul-99 | 9 | Dec-01 | 1 | May-04 | 2 | Oct-06 | 0 |
| Aug-99 | 11 | Jan-02 | 2 | Jun-04 | 6 | Nov-06 | 2 |
| Sep-99 | 2 | Feb-02 | 6 | Jul-04 | 1 | Dec-06 | 0 |
| Oct-99 | 0 | Mar-02 | 6 | Aug-04 | 1 | Jan-07 | 1 |
| Nov-99 | 2 | Apr-02 | 6 | Sep-04 | 0 | Feb-07 | 0 |
| Dec-99 | 4 | May-02 | 1 | Oct-04 | 1 | Mar-07 | 1 |
| Jan-00 | 5 | Jun-02 | 0 | Nov-04 | 1 | Apr-07 | 1 |
| Feb-00 | 6 | Jul-02 | 3 | Dec-04 | 12 | May-07 | 0 |
| Mar-00 | 1 | Aug-02 | 6 | Jan-05 | 1 | Jun-07 | 0 |
| Apr-00 | 5 | Sep-02 | 0 | Feb-05 | 3 | Jul-07 | 1 |
| May-00 | 6 | Oct-02 | 3 | Mar-05 | 7 | Aug-07 | 0 |
| Jun-00 | 10 | Nov-02 | 3 | Apr-05 | 2 | Sep-07 | 1 |
| Jul-00 | 3 | Dec-02 | 1 | May-05 | 1 | Oct-07 | 2 |
| Aug-00 | 4 | Jan-03 | 0 | Jun-05 | 0 | Nov-07 | 2 |
| Sep-00 | 5 | Feb-03 | 2 | Jul-05 | 5 | Dec-07 | 4 |
| Oct-00 | 1 | Mar-03 | 1 | Aug-05 | 0 | Jan-08 | 6 |
| Nov-00 | 0 | Apr-03 | 0 | Sep-05 | 0 | | |
| Dec-00 | 2 | May-03 | 5 | Oct-05 | 0 | | |

**Table S2.2**: Number of stories per month on the conflict in the Congo in the *Washington Post*, August 1998 – January 2008.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Aug-98 | 26 | Jan-01 | 8 | Jun-03 | 7 | Nov-05 | 0 |
| Sep-98 | 4 | Feb-01 | 3 | Jul-03 | 2 | Dec-05 | 0 |
| Oct-98 | 7 | Mar-01 | 4 | Aug-03 | 2 | Jan-06 | 0 |
| Nov-98 | 3 | Apr-01 | 3 | Sep-03 | 0 | Feb-06 | 0 |
| Dec-98 | 2 | May-01 | 2 | Oct-03 | 2 | Mar-06 | 0 |
| Jan-99 | 5 | Jun-01 | 1 | Nov-03 | 2 | Apr-06 | 0 |
| Feb-99 | 1 | Jul-01 | 0 | Dec-03 | 0 | May-06 | 0 |
| Mar-99 | 3 | Aug-01 | 1 | Jan-04 | 0 | Jun-06 | 1 |
| Apr-99 | 0 | Sep-01 | 1 | Feb-04 | 0 | Jul-06 | 4 |
| May-99 | 1 | Oct-01 | 1 | Mar-04 | 0 | Aug-06 | 0 |
| Jun-99 | 2 | Nov-01 | 2 | Apr-04 | 0 | Sep-06 | 0 |
| Jul-99 | 5 | Dec-01 | 1 | May-04 | 0 | Oct-06 | 2 |
| Aug-99 | 5 | Jan-02 | 0 | Jun-04 | 6 | Nov-06 | 4 |
| Sep-99 | 2 | Feb-02 | 0 | Jul-04 | 1 | Dec-06 | 0 |
| Oct-99 | 0 | Mar-02 | 2 | Aug-04 | 1 | Jan-07 | 0 |
| Nov-99 | 3 | Apr-02 | 0 | Sep-04 | 0 | Feb-07 | 0 |
| Dec-99 | 1 | May-02 | 0 | Oct-04 | 0 | Mar-07 | 0 |
| Jan-00 | 3 | Jun-02 | 0 | Nov-04 | 2 | Apr-07 | 0 |
| Feb-00 | 2 | Jul-02 | 4 | Dec-04 | 3 | May-07 | 2 |
| Mar-00 | 1 | Aug-02 | 2 | Jan-05 | 0 | Jun-07 | 1 |
| Apr-00 | 1 | Sep-02 | 0 | Feb-05 | 3 | Jul-07 | 4 |
| May-00 | 4 | Oct-02 | 1 | Mar-05 | 7 | Aug-07 | 1 |
| Jun-00 | 7 | Nov-02 | 0 | Apr-05 | 0 | Sep-07 | 1 |
| Jul-00 | 0 | Dec-02 | 1 | May-05 | 0 | Oct-07 | 1 |
| Aug-00 | 0 | Jan-03 | 0 | Jun-05 | 0 | Nov-07 | 0 |
| Sep-00 | 0 | Feb-03 | 1 | Jul-05 | 1 | Dec-07 | 1 |
| Oct-00 | 2 | Mar-03 | 1 | Aug-05 | 0 | Jan-08 | 2 |
| Nov-00 | 0 | Apr-03 | 0 | Sep-05 | 0 | | |
| Dec-00 | 0 | May-03 | 2 | Oct-05 | 0 | | |

**Table S2.3**: Combined number of stories per month on the conflict in the Congo in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, August 1998 – January 2008.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Aug-98 | 59 | Jan-01 | 14 | Jun-03 | 26 | Nov-05 | 0 |
| Sep-98 | 14 | Feb-01 | 13 | Jul-03 | 8 | Dec-05 | 1 |
| Oct-98 | 11 | Mar-01 | 7 | Aug-03 | 3 | Jan-06 | 1 |
| Nov-98 | 11 | Apr-01 | 10 | Sep-03 | 0 | Feb-06 | 1 |
| Dec-98 | 9 | May-01 | 13 | Oct-03 | 7 | Mar-06 | 3 |
| Jan-99 | 14 | Jun-01 | 7 | Nov-03 | 3 | Apr-06 | 0 |
| Feb-99 | 2 | Jul-01 | 3 | Dec-03 | 0 | May-06 | 0 |
| Mar-99 | 3 | Aug-01 | 1 | Jan-04 | 3 | Jun-06 | 3 |
| Apr-99 | 0 | Sep-01 | 2 | Feb-04 | 5 | Jul-06 | 7 |
| May-99 | 3 | Oct-01 | 4 | Mar-04 | 3 | Aug-06 | 3 |
| Jun-99 | 7 | Nov-01 | 2 | Apr-04 | 1 | Sep-06 | 0 |
| Jul-99 | 14 | Dec-01 | 2 | May-04 | 2 | Oct-06 | 2 |
| Aug-99 | 16 | Jan-02 | 2 | Jun-04 | 12 | Nov-06 | 6 |
| Sep-99 | 4 | Feb-02 | 6 | Jul-04 | 2 | Dec-06 | 0 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Oct-99 | 0 | Mar-02 | 8 | Aug-04 | 2 | Jan-07 | 1 |
| Nov-99 | 5 | Apr-02 | 6 | Sep-04 | 0 | Feb-07 | 0 |
| Dec-99 | 5 | May-02 | 1 | Oct-04 | 1 | Mar-07 | 1 |
| Jan-00 | 8 | Jun-02 | 0 | Nov-04 | 3 | Apr-07 | 1 |
| Feb-00 | 8 | Jul-02 | 7 | Dec-04 | 15 | May-07 | 2 |
| Mar-00 | 2 | Aug-02 | 8 | Jan-05 | 1 | Jun-07 | 1 |
| Apr-00 | 6 | Sep-02 | 0 | Feb-05 | 6 | Jul-07 | 5 |
| May-00 | 10 | Oct-02 | 4 | Mar-05 | 14 | Aug-07 | 1 |
| Jun-00 | 17 | Nov-02 | 3 | Apr-05 | 2 | Sep-07 | 2 |
| Jul-00 | 3 | Dec-02 | 2 | May-05 | 1 | Oct-07 | 3 |
| Aug-00 | 4 | Jan-03 | 0 | Jun-05 | 0 | Nov-07 | 2 |
| Sep-00 | 5 | Feb-03 | 3 | Jul-05 | 6 | Dec-07 | 5 |
| Oct-00 | 3 | Mar-03 | 2 | Aug-05 | 0 | Jan-08 | 8 |
| Nov-00 | 0 | Apr-03 | 0 | Sep-05 | 0 | | |
| Dec-00 | 2 | May-03 | 7 | Oct-05 | 0 | | |

**Data for the number of stories per month on the Kosovo conflict (Figure 2.2).**

**Table S2.4**: Number of stories per month on the conflict in Kosovo in the *New York Times*, April 1996 – June 1999.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Apr-96 | 0 | Feb-97 | 1 | Dec-97 | 3 | Oct-98 | 48 |
| May-96 | 0 | Mar-97 | 0 | Jan-98 | 0 | Nov-98 | 14 |
| Jun-96 | 0 | Apr-97 | 0 | Feb-98 | 0 | Dec-98 | 19 |
| Jul-96 | 0 | May-97 | 0 | Mar-98 | 31 | Jan-99 | 41 |
| Aug-96 | 0 | Jun-97 | 0 | Apr-98 | 6 | Feb-99 | 62 |
| Sep-96 | 0 | Jul-97 | 0 | May-98 | 12 | Mar-99 | 117 |
| Oct-96 | 0 | Aug-97 | 0 | Jun-98 | 39 | Apr-99 | 221 |
| Nov-96 | 0 | Sep-97 | 0 | Jul-98 | 24 | May-99 | 169 |
| Dec-96 | 0 | Oct-97 | 1 | Aug-98 | 24 | Jun-99 | 195 |
| Jan-97 | 0 | Nov-97 | 1 | Sep-98 | 18 | | |

**Table S2.5**: Number of stories per month on the conflict in Kosovo in the *Washington Post*, April 1996 – June 1999.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Apr-96 | 0 | Feb-97 | 0 | Dec-97 | 0 | Oct-98 | 43 |
| May-96 | 0 | Mar-97 | 0 | Jan-98 | 0 | Nov-98 | 8 |
| Jun-96 | 0 | Apr-97 | 0 | Feb-98 | 0 | Dec-98 | 18 |
| Jul-96 | 0 | May-97 | 0 | Mar-98 | 25 | Jan-99 | 32 |
| Aug-96 | 0 | Jun-97 | 0 | Apr-98 | 6 | Feb-99 | 58 |
| Sep-96 | 0 | Jul-97 | 0 | May-98 | 17 | Mar-99 | 82 |
| Oct-96 | 0 | Aug-97 | 0 | Jun-98 | 39 | Apr-99 | 167 |
| Nov-96 | 0 | Sep-97 | 0 | Jul-98 | 23 | May-99 | 121 |
| Dec-96 | 0 | Oct-97 | 1 | Aug-98 | 17 | Jun-99 | 149 |
| Jan-97 | 1 | Nov-97 | 0 | Sep-98 | 11 | | |

**Table S2.6**: Combined number of stories per month on the conflict in Kosovo in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, April 1996 – June 1999.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Apr-96 | 0 | Feb-97 | 1 | Dec-97 | 3 | Oct-98 | 91 |
| May-96 | 0 | Mar-97 | 0 | Jan-98 | 0 | Nov-98 | 22 |
| Jun-96 | 0 | Apr-97 | 0 | Feb-98 | 0 | Dec-98 | 37 |
| Jul-96 | 0 | May-97 | 0 | Mar-98 | 56 | Jan-99 | 73 |
| Aug-96 | 0 | Jun-97 | 0 | Apr-98 | 12 | Feb-99 | 120 |
| Sep-96 | 0 | Jul-97 | 0 | May-98 | 29 | Mar-99 | 199 |
| Oct-96 | 0 | Aug-97 | 0 | Jun-98 | 78 | Apr-99 | 388 |
| Nov-96 | 0 | Sep-97 | 0 | Jul-98 | 47 | May-99 | 290 |
| Dec-96 | 0 | Oct-97 | 2 | Aug-98 | 41 | Jun-99 | 344 |
| Jan-97 | 1 | Nov-97 | 1 | Sep-98 | 29 | | |

## Data for the number of opinion pieces per month on the Congo conflict (Figure 2.4).

**Table S2.7**: Number of columns, editorials and op-eds per month on the conflict in the Congo in the *New York Times*, August 1998 – January 2008.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Aug-98 | 3 | Jan-01 | 3 | Jun-03 | 1 | Nov-05 | 0 |
| Sep-98 | 0 | Feb-01 | 2 | Jul-03 | 0 | Dec-05 | 0 |
| Oct-98 | 0 | Mar-01 | 2 | Aug-03 | 1 | Jan-06 | 0 |
| Nov-98 | 0 | Apr-01 | 0 | Sep-03 | 0 | Feb-06 | 0 |
| Dec-98 | 0 | May-01 | 1 | Oct-03 | 0 | Mar-06 | 0 |
| Jan-99 | 0 | Jun-01 | 0 | Nov-03 | 0 | Apr-06 | 0 |
| Feb-99 | 0 | Jul-01 | 0 | Dec-03 | 1 | May-06 | 0 |
| Mar-99 | 0 | Aug-01 | 0 | Jan-04 | 0 | Jun-06 | 0 |
| Apr-99 | 0 | Sep-01 | 0 | Feb-04 | 0 | Jul-06 | 1 |
| May-99 | 0 | Oct-01 | 0 | Mar-04 | 0 | Aug-06 | 0 |
| Jun-99 | 0 | Nov-01 | 1 | Apr-04 | 0 | Sep-06 | 2 |
| Jul-99 | 0 | Dec-01 | 0 | May-04 | 0 | Oct-06 | 0 |
| Aug-99 | 3 | Jan-02 | 0 | Jun-04 | 0 | Nov-06 | 0 |
| Sep-99 | 1 | Feb-02 | 0 | Jul-04 | 0 | Dec-06 | 0 |
| Oct-99 | 0 | Mar-02 | 0 | Aug-04 | 0 | Jan-07 | 0 |
| Nov-99 | 0 | Apr-02 | 0 | Sep-04 | 0 | Feb-07 | 0 |
| Dec-99 | 0 | May-02 | 0 | Oct-04 | 0 | Mar-07 | 0 |
| Jan-00 | 3 | Jun-02 | 0 | Nov-04 | 0 | Apr-07 | 0 |
| Feb-00 | 1 | Jul-02 | 0 | Dec-04 | 0 | May-07 | 0 |
| Mar-00 | 0 | Aug-02 | 2 | Jan-05 | 0 | Jun-07 | 3 |
| Apr-00 | 0 | Sep-02 | 0 | Feb-05 | 0 | Jul-07 | 0 |
| May-00 | 1 | Oct-02 | 0 | Mar-05 | 0 | Aug-07 | 0 |
| Jun-00 | 0 | Nov-02 | 0 | Apr-05 | 0 | Sep-07 | 0 |
| Jul-00 | 1 | Dec-02 | 0 | May-05 | 1 | Oct-07 | 0 |
| Aug-00 | 0 | Jan-03 | 0 | Jun-05 | 0 | Nov-07 | 0 |
| Sep-00 | 0 | Feb-03 | 0 | Jul-05 | 0 | Dec-07 | 0 |
| Oct-00 | 0 | Mar-03 | 0 | Aug-05 | 0 | Jan-08 | 0 |
| Nov-00 | 0 | Apr-03 | 1 | Sep-05 | 0 | | |
| Dec-00 | 0 | May-03 | 2 | Oct-05 | 1 | | |

**Table S2.8**: Number of columns, editorials and op-eds per month on the conflict in the Congo in the *Washington Post*, August 1998 – January 2008.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Aug-98 | 3 | Jan-01 | 0 | Jun-03 | 3 | Nov-05 | 0 |
| Sep-98 | 0 | Feb-01 | 1 | Jul-03 | 1 | Dec-05 | 0 |
| Oct-98 | 1 | Mar-01 | 0 | Aug-03 | 0 | Jan-06 | 0 |
| Nov-98 | 0 | Apr-01 | 0 | Sep-03 | 1 | Feb-06 | 0 |
| Dec-98 | 0 | May-01 | 0 | Oct-03 | 0 | Mar-06 | 0 |
| Jan-99 | 1 | Jun-01 | 1 | Nov-03 | 0 | Apr-06 | 0 |
| Feb-99 | 0 | Jul-01 | 0 | Dec-03 | 0 | May-06 | 0 |
| Mar-99 | 1 | Aug-01 | 0 | Jan-04 | 0 | Jun-06 | 0 |
| Apr-99 | 0 | Sep-01 | 0 | Feb-04 | 0 | Jul-06 | 2 |
| May-99 | 0 | Oct-01 | 0 | Mar-04 | 0 | Aug-06 | 0 |
| Jun-99 | 0 | Nov-01 | 0 | Apr-04 | 0 | Sep-06 | 0 |
| Jul-99 | 1 | Dec-01 | 0 | May-04 | 0 | Oct-06 | 0 |
| Aug-99 | 0 | Jan-02 | 0 | Jun-04 | 0 | Nov-06 | 1 |
| Sep-99 | 1 | Feb-02 | 0 | Jul-04 | 0 | Dec-06 | 0 |
| Oct-99 | 0 | Mar-02 | 0 | Aug-04 | 1 | Jan-07 | 0 |
| Nov-99 | 0 | Apr-02 | 0 | Sep-04 | 0 | Feb-07 | 0 |
| Dec-99 | 0 | May-02 | 0 | Oct-04 | 0 | Mar-07 | 0 |
| Jan-00 | 1 | Jun-02 | 0 | Nov-04 | 1 | Apr-07 | 0 |
| Feb-00 | 2 | Jul-02 | 1 | Dec-04 | 2 | May-07 | 0 |
| Mar-00 | 0 | Aug-02 | 0 | Jan-05 | 0 | Jun-07 | 0 |
| Apr-00 | 0 | Sep-02 | 0 | Feb-05 | 1 | Jul-07 | 0 |
| May-00 | 1 | Oct-02 | 1 | Mar-05 | 1 | Aug-07 | 0 |
| Jun-00 | 1 | Nov-02 | 0 | Apr-05 | 2 | Sep-07 | 0 |
| Jul-00 | 0 | Dec-02 | 0 | May-05 | 0 | Oct-07 | 0 |
| Aug-00 | 1 | Jan-03 | 0 | Jun-05 | 0 | Nov-07 | 1 |
| Sep-00 | 0 | Feb-03 | 0 | Jul-05 | 0 | Dec-07 | 0 |
| Oct-00 | 1 | Mar-03 | 0 | Aug-05 | 1 | Jan-08 | 1 |
| Nov-00 | 0 | Apr-03 | 2 | Sep-05 | 0 | | |
| Dec-00 | 0 | May-03 | 0 | Oct-05 | 0 | | |

**Table S2.9**: Combined number of columns, editorials and op-eds per month on the conflict in the Congo in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, August 1998 – January 2008.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Aug-98 | 6 | Jan-01 | 3 | Jun-03 | 4 | Nov-05 | 0 |
| Sep-98 | 0 | Feb-01 | 3 | Jul-03 | 1 | Dec-05 | 0 |
| Oct-98 | 1 | Mar-01 | 2 | Aug-03 | 1 | Jan-06 | 0 |
| Nov-98 | 0 | Apr-01 | 0 | Sep-03 | 1 | Feb-06 | 0 |
| Dec-98 | 0 | May-01 | 1 | Oct-03 | 0 | Mar-06 | 0 |
| Jan-99 | 1 | Jun-01 | 1 | Nov-03 | 0 | Apr-06 | 0 |
| Feb-99 | 0 | Jul-01 | 0 | Dec-03 | 1 | May-06 | 0 |
| Mar-99 | 1 | Aug-01 | 0 | Jan-04 | 0 | Jun-06 | 0 |
| Apr-99 | 0 | Sep-01 | 0 | Feb-04 | 0 | Jul-06 | 3 |
| May-99 | 0 | Oct-01 | 0 | Mar-04 | 0 | Aug-06 | 0 |
| Jun-99 | 0 | Nov-01 | 1 | Apr-04 | 0 | Sep-06 | 2 |
| Jul-99 | 1 | Dec-01 | 0 | May-04 | 0 | Oct-06 | 0 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Aug-99 | 3 | Jan-02 | 0 | Jun-04 | 0 | Nov-06 | 1 |
| Sep-99 | 2 | Feb-02 | 0 | Jul-04 | 0 | Dec-06 | 0 |
| Oct-99 | 0 | Mar-02 | 0 | Aug-04 | 1 | Jan-07 | 0 |
| Nov-99 | 0 | Apr-02 | 0 | Sep-04 | 0 | Feb-07 | 0 |
| Dec-99 | 0 | May-02 | 0 | Oct-04 | 0 | Mar-07 | 0 |
| Jan-00 | 4 | Jun-02 | 0 | Nov-04 | 1 | Apr-07 | 0 |
| Feb-00 | 3 | Jul-02 | 1 | Dec-04 | 2 | May-07 | 0 |
| Mar-00 | 0 | Aug-02 | 2 | Jan-05 | 0 | Jun-07 | 3 |
| Apr-00 | 0 | Sep-02 | 0 | Feb-05 | 1 | Jul-07 | 0 |
| May-00 | 2 | Oct-02 | 1 | Mar-05 | 1 | Aug-07 | 0 |
| Jun-00 | 1 | Nov-02 | 0 | Apr-05 | 2 | Sep-07 | 0 |
| Jul-00 | 1 | Dec-02 | 0 | May-05 | 1 | Oct-07 | 0 |
| Aug-00 | 1 | Jan-03 | 0 | Jun-05 | 0 | Nov-07 | 1 |
| Sep-00 | 0 | Feb-03 | 0 | Jul-05 | 0 | Dec-07 | 0 |
| Oct-00 | 1 | Mar-03 | 0 | Aug-05 | 1 | Jan-08 | 1 |
| Nov-00 | 0 | Apr-03 | 3 | Sep-05 | 0 | | |
| Dec-00 | 0 | May-03 | 2 | Oct-05 | 1 | | |

## Data for the number of opinion pieces per month on the Kosovo conflict (Figure 2.4).

**Table S2.10**: Number of columns, editorials and op-eds per month on the conflict in Kosovo in the *New York Times*, April 1996 – June 1999.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Apr-96 | 0 | Feb-97 | 0 | Dec-97 | 0 | Oct-98 | 6 |
| May-96 | 0 | Mar-97 | 0 | Jan-98 | 0 | Nov-98 | 1 |
| Jun-96 | 0 | Apr-97 | 0 | Feb-98 | 0 | Dec-98 | 0 |
| Jul-96 | 0 | May-97 | 0 | Mar-98 | 6 | Jan-99 | 3 |
| Aug-96 | 0 | Jun-97 | 0 | Apr-98 | 0 | Feb-99 | 7 |
| Sep-96 | 0 | Jul-97 | 0 | May-98 | 2 | Mar-99 | 20 |
| Oct-96 | 0 | Aug-97 | 0 | Jun-98 | 1 | Apr-99 | 44 |
| Nov-96 | 0 | Sep-97 | 0 | Jul-98 | 0 | May-99 | 28 |
| Dec-96 | 1 | Oct-97 | 1 | Aug-98 | 0 | Jun-99 | 30 |
| Jan-97 | 0 | Nov-97 | 0 | Sep-98 | 3 | | |

**Table S2.11**: Number of columns, editorials and op-eds per month on the conflict in Kosovo in the *Washington Post*, April 1996 – June 1999.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Apr-96 | 0 | Feb-97 | 0 | Dec-97 | 0 | Oct-98 | 15 |
| May-96 | 0 | Mar-97 | 0 | Jan-98 | 0 | Nov-98 | 1 |
| Jun-96 | 0 | Apr-97 | 0 | Feb-98 | 0 | Dec-98 | 2 |
| Jul-96 | 0 | May-97 | 0 | Mar-98 | 6 | Jan-99 | 7 |
| Aug-96 | 0 | Jun-97 | 0 | Apr-98 | 3 | Feb-99 | 16 |
| Sep-96 | 0 | Jul-97 | 0 | May-98 | 5 | Mar-99 | 28 |
| Oct-96 | 0 | Aug-97 | 0 | Jun-98 | 5 | Apr-99 | 69 |
| Nov-96 | 0 | Sep-97 | 0 | Jul-98 | 2 | May-99 | 39 |
| Dec-96 | 0 | Oct-97 | 0 | Aug-98 | 2 | Jun-99 | 35 |
| Jan-97 | 0 | Nov-97 | 0 | Sep-98 | 6 | | |

**Table S2.12**: Combined number of columns, editorials and op-eds per month on the conflict in Kosovo in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, April 1996 – June 1999.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Apr-96 | 0 | Feb-97 | 0 | Dec-97 | 0 | Oct-98 | 21 |
| May-96 | 0 | Mar-97 | 0 | Jan-98 | 0 | Nov-98 | 2 |
| Jun-96 | 0 | Apr-97 | 0 | Feb-98 | 0 | Dec-98 | 2 |
| Jul-96 | 0 | May-97 | 0 | Mar-98 | 12 | Jan-99 | 10 |
| Aug-96 | 0 | Jun-97 | 0 | Apr-98 | 3 | Feb-99 | 23 |
| Sep-96 | 0 | Jul-97 | 0 | May-98 | 7 | Mar-99 | 48 |
| Oct-96 | 0 | Aug-97 | 0 | Jun-98 | 6 | Apr-99 | 113 |
| Nov-96 | 0 | Sep-97 | 0 | Jul-98 | 2 | May-99 | 67 |
| Dec-96 | 1 | Oct-97 | 1 | Aug-98 | 2 | Jun-99 | 65 |
| Jan-97 | 0 | Nov-97 | 0 | Sep-98 | 9 | | |

## Data for the number of stories per month on the Darfur conflict (Figure 2.6).

**Table S2.13**: Number of stories per month on the conflict in Darfur in the *New York Times*, February 2003 – January 2008.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Feb-03 | 0 | May-04 | 4 | Aug-05 | 0 | Nov-06 | 2 |
| Mar-03 | 0 | Jun-04 | 9 | Sep-05 | 2 | Dec-06 | 3 |
| Apr-03 | 0 | Jul-04 | 19 | Oct-05 | 2 | Jan-07 | 5 |
| May-03 | 0 | Aug-04 | 18 | Nov-05 | 5 | Feb-07 | 2 |
| Jun-03 | 0 | Sep-04 | 15 | Dec-05 | 2 | Mar-07 | 4 |
| Jul-03 | 0 | Oct-04 | 12 | Jan-06 | 4 | Apr-07 | 3 |
| Aug-03 | 0 | Nov-04 | 12 | Feb-06 | 7 | May-07 | 4 |
| Sep-03 | 0 | Dec-04 | 7 | Mar-06 | 4 | Jun-07 | 7 |
| Oct-03 | 0 | Jan-05 | 5 | Apr-06 | 13 | Jul-07 | 11 |
| Nov-03 | 0 | Feb-05 | 5 | May-06 | 17 | Aug-07 | 8 |
| Dec-03 | 0 | Mar-05 | 5 | Jun-06 | 3 | Sep-07 | 12 |
| Jan-04 | 2 | Apr-05 | 9 | Jul-06 | 2 | Oct-07 | 14 |
| Feb-04 | 1 | May-05 | 5 | Aug-06 | 8 | Nov-07 | 8 |
| Mar-04 | 1 | Jun-05 | 2 | Sep-06 | 13 | Dec-07 | 4 |
| Apr-04 | 3 | Jul-05 | 3 | Oct-06 | 5 | Jan-08 | 6 |

**Table S2.14**: Number of stories per month on the conflict in Darfur in the *Washington Post*, February 2003 – January 2008.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Feb-03 | 0 | May-04 | 5 | Aug-05 | 3 | Nov-06 | 6 |
| Mar-03 | 0 | Jun-04 | 7 | Sep-05 | 0 | Dec-06 | 4 |
| Apr-03 | 0 | Jul-04 | 13 | Oct-05 | 1 | Jan-07 | 5 |
| May-03 | 0 | Aug-04 | 10 | Nov-05 | 5 | Feb-07 | 3 |
| Jun-03 | 0 | Sep-04 | 14 | Dec-05 | 3 | Mar-07 | 4 |
| Jul-03 | 0 | Oct-04 | 7 | Jan-06 | 3 | Apr-07 | 9 |
| Aug-03 | 0 | Nov-04 | 14 | Feb-06 | 5 | May-07 | 8 |
| Sep-03 | 0 | Dec-04 | 5 | Mar-06 | 1 | Jun-07 | 7 |
| Oct-03 | 0 | Jan-05 | 4 | Apr-06 | 8 | Jul-07 | 3 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Nov-03 | 0 | Feb-05 | 4 | May-06 | 10 | Aug-07 | 5 |
| Dec-03 | 0 | Mar-05 | 3 | Jun-06 | 0 | Sep-07 | 7 |
| Jan-04 | 0 | Apr-05 | 8 | Jul-06 | 2 | Oct-07 | 8 |
| Feb-04 | 0 | May-05 | 4 | Aug-06 | 4 | Nov-07 | 6 |
| Mar-04 | 0 | Jun-05 | 2 | Sep-06 | 13 | Dec-07 | 5 |
| Apr-04 | 2 | Jul-05 | 5 | Oct-06 | 5 | Jan-08 | 3 |

**Table S2.15**: Combined number of stories per month on the conflict in Darfur in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, February 2003 – January 2008.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Feb-03 | 0 | May-04 | 9 | Aug-05 | 3 | Nov-06 | 8 |
| Mar-03 | 0 | Jun-04 | 16 | Sep-05 | 2 | Dec-06 | 7 |
| Apr-03 | 0 | Jul-04 | 32 | Oct-05 | 3 | Jan-07 | 10 |
| May-03 | 0 | Aug-04 | 28 | Nov-05 | 10 | Feb-07 | 5 |
| Jun-03 | 0 | Sep-04 | 29 | Dec-05 | 5 | Mar-07 | 8 |
| Jul-03 | 0 | Oct-04 | 19 | Jan-06 | 7 | Apr-07 | 12 |
| Aug-03 | 0 | Nov-04 | 26 | Feb-06 | 12 | May-07 | 12 |
| Sep-03 | 0 | Dec-04 | 12 | Mar-06 | 5 | Jun-07 | 14 |
| Oct-03 | 0 | Jan-05 | 9 | Apr-06 | 21 | Jul-07 | 14 |
| Nov-03 | 0 | Feb-05 | 9 | May-06 | 27 | Aug-07 | 13 |
| Dec-03 | 0 | Mar-05 | 8 | Jun-06 | 3 | Sep-07 | 19 |
| Jan-04 | 2 | Apr-05 | 17 | Jul-06 | 4 | Oct-07 | 22 |
| Feb-04 | 1 | May-05 | 9 | Aug-06 | 12 | Nov-07 | 14 |
| Mar-04 | 1 | Jun-05 | 4 | Sep-06 | 26 | Dec-07 | 9 |
| Apr-04 | 5 | Jul-05 | 8 | Oct-06 | 10 | Jan-08 | 9 |

## Data for the number of opinion pieces per month on the Darfur conflict (Figure 2.8).

**Table S2.16**: Number of columns, editorials and op-eds per month on the conflict in Darfur in the *New York Times*, February 2003 – January 2008.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Feb-03 | 0 | May-04 | 0 | Aug-05 | 1 | Nov-06 | 3 |
| Mar-03 | 0 | Jun-04 | 4 | Sep-05 | 1 | Dec-06 | 1 |
| Apr-03 | 0 | Jul-04 | 3 | Oct-05 | 0 | Jan-07 | 2 |
| May-03 | 0 | Aug-04 | 2 | Nov-05 | 5 | Feb-07 | 1 |
| Jun-03 | 0 | Sep-04 | 0 | Dec-05 | 0 | Mar-07 | 3 |
| Jul-03 | 0 | Oct-04 | 2 | Jan-06 | 2 | Apr-07 | 0 |
| Aug-03 | 0 | Nov-04 | 0 | Feb-06 | 2 | May-07 | 2 |
| Sep-03 | 0 | Dec-04 | 0 | Mar-06 | 4 | Jun-07 | 2 |
| Oct-03 | 0 | Jan-05 | 0 | Apr-06 | 3 | Jul-07 | 2 |
| Nov-03 | 0 | Feb-05 | 1 | May-06 | 7 | Aug-07 | 3 |
| Dec-03 | 0 | Mar-05 | 1 | Jun-06 | 2 | Sep-07 | 1 |
| Jan-04 | 0 | Apr-05 | 1 | Jul-06 | 1 | Oct-07 | 0 |
| Feb-04 | 0 | May-05 | 3 | Aug-06 | 1 | Nov-07 | 1 |
| Mar-04 | 1 | Jun-05 | 2 | Sep-06 | 4 | Dec-07 | 1 |
| Apr-04 | 1 | Jul-05 | 2 | Oct-06 | 3 | Jan-08 | 1 |

**Table S2.17**: Number of columns, editorials and op-eds per month on the conflict in Darfur in the *Washington Post*, February 2003 – January 2008.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Feb-03 | 0 | May-04 | 2 | Aug-05 | 2 | Nov-06 | 4 |
| Mar-03 | 0 | Jun-04 | 4 | Sep-05 | 1 | Dec-06 | 0 |
| Apr-03 | 0 | Jul-04 | 5 | Oct-05 | 1 | Jan-07 | 2 |
| May-03 | 0 | Aug-04 | 7 | Nov-05 | 1 | Feb-07 | 2 |
| Jun-03 | 0 | Sep-04 | 8 | Dec-05 | 2 | Mar-07 | 0 |
| Jul-03 | 0 | Oct-04 | 3 | Jan-06 | 2 | Apr-07 | 1 |
| Aug-03 | 0 | Nov-04 | 4 | Feb-06 | 1 | May-07 | 2 |
| Sep-03 | 0 | Dec-04 | 5 | Mar-06 | 1 | Jun-07 | 2 |
| Oct-03 | 0 | Jan-05 | 5 | Apr-06 | 3 | Jul-07 | 1 |
| Nov-03 | 0 | Feb-05 | 2 | May-06 | 2 | Aug-07 | 3 |
| Dec-03 | 0 | Mar-05 | 5 | Jun-06 | 0 | Sep-07 | 2 |
| Jan-04 | 0 | Apr-05 | 4 | Jul-06 | 2 | Oct-07 | 0 |
| Feb-04 | 1 | May-05 | 2 | Aug-06 | 3 | Nov-07 | 2 |
| Mar-04 | 0 | Jun-05 | 1 | Sep-06 | 5 | Dec-07 | 2 |
| Apr-04 | 2 | Jul-05 | 3 | Oct-06 | 4 | Jan-08 | 0 |

**Table S2.18**: Combined number of columns, editorials and op-eds per month on the conflict in Darfur in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, February 2003 – January 2008.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Feb-03 | 0 | May-04 | 2 | Aug-05 | 3 | Nov-06 | 7 |
| Mar-03 | 0 | Jun-04 | 8 | Sep-05 | 2 | Dec-06 | 1 |
| Apr-03 | 0 | Jul-04 | 8 | Oct-05 | 1 | Jan-07 | 4 |
| May-03 | 0 | Aug-04 | 9 | Nov-05 | 6 | Feb-07 | 3 |
| Jun-03 | 0 | Sep-04 | 8 | Dec-05 | 2 | Mar-07 | 3 |
| Jul-03 | 0 | Oct-04 | 5 | Jan-06 | 4 | Apr-07 | 1 |
| Aug-03 | 0 | Nov-04 | 4 | Feb-06 | 3 | May-07 | 4 |
| Sep-03 | 0 | Dec-04 | 5 | Mar-06 | 5 | Jun-07 | 4 |
| Oct-03 | 0 | Jan-05 | 5 | Apr-06 | 6 | Jul-07 | 3 |
| Nov-03 | 0 | Feb-05 | 3 | May-06 | 9 | Aug-07 | 6 |
| Dec-03 | 0 | Mar-05 | 6 | Jun-06 | 2 | Sep-07 | 3 |
| Jan-04 | 0 | Apr-05 | 5 | Jul-06 | 3 | Oct-07 | 0 |
| Feb-04 | 1 | May-05 | 5 | Aug-06 | 4 | Nov-07 | 3 |
| Mar-04 | 1 | Jun-05 | 3 | Sep-06 | 9 | Dec-07 | 3 |
| Apr-04 | 3 | Jul-05 | 5 | Oct-06 | 7 | Jan-08 | 1 |

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